

TERROR

NOTORIOUS 1950s EC COMICS!



NO. 24  
JUNE



250  
3<sup>44</sup>  
CANADA

# TALES FROM THE CRYPT

FEATURING



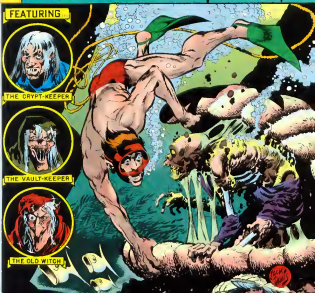
THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE VAULT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH! I SEE YOU'RE *HUNGRY* FOR *HORROR* AGAIN. WELL, REST ASSURED, YOUR *APPETITE* WILL BE *SATISFIED*. IN FACT, WHEN YOU'RE *THROUGH* WITH THIS *PUTRID PERIODICAL*, YOU WILL HAVE *LOST* YOUR *APPETITE* *ENTIRELY*. SO DON'T JUST STAND THERE *DROOLING*. *COME IN!* WELCOME ONCE MORE TO THE *CRYPT OF TERROR*. THIS IS YOUR *HOST* IN *HOWLS*, YOUR *HAUSEATING NARRATOR*, THE *CRYPT-KEEPER*, READY TO *CHILL* YOUR *SPINE* AND *CURL* YOUR *BLOOD* WITH THE *SPINE-TINGLING TALE* OF *TERROR*. I CALL...

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT



THE EVENING PERFORMANCE IS OVER AND THE CIRCUS GROUNDS ARE SILENT SAVE FOR THE FLAPPING OF CANNES AND THE OCCASIONAL SCURT OF A CADED ANIMAL. OVERHEAD, A COLD MOON ILLUMINATES THE MIDNIGHT LANDSCAPE. SUDDENLY, A SHADOWY FIGURE EMERGES FROM ONE OF THE DARKENED TENTS AND SLIDES SILENTLY ACROSS THE MIDWAY, WHISPERING...



THE WOMAN PEERS INTO THE SHADOWS, STRAINING TO SEE, HER HEART RACING. THE MAN STEPS INTO THE DIM COLD LIGHT, HIS ARMS EXTENDED...



OH, ERIC, DARLING...

MY DEAREST...

THEY EMBRACE... WARMLY... PASSIONATELY... HUNGRY LIPS... HOLDING CLOSE...



WHAT ABOUT CARL?

HE IS ASLEEP. HE DREAMS OF PAINS AND THE POWER HE HAS KNOWN...

THE MAN LOOKS INTO THE WOMAN'S EYES, GREY-GREEN IN THE MOONLIGHT

BUT YOU SAID YOU CAN ONLY READ THE THOUGHTS IN HIS MIND. HE WANTS YOU TO READ?

HE TALKS TO ME, ERIC. HE HAS ALWAYS TALKED TO ME WITH THE POWER HE HAS OVER ME!



THE MAN SHAKES HIS HEAD BADLY, STROKING THE WOMAN'S SOFT FLOWING HAIR...



WHY DID YOU EVER MARRY HIM, MARTHA?

IT WAS A MISTAKE, ERIC. I MISFOOT THIS PREAR OF NATURE... THIS ONCE IN A LIFETIME OCCURANCE... THIS ABILITY OF CARL'S TO PROJECT THOUGHTS AND WINE TO READ THEM... FOR LOVE?

WE DISCOVERED THIS ABILITY QUITE BY ACCIDENT MANY YEARS AGO. CARL IMMEDIATELY RECOGNIZED ITS GREAT VALUE. BEFORE I KNEW IT, WE'D TEAMED UP AS A MIND-READING ACT, JOINED THIS TRAVELING CIRQUE, AND WERE MARRIED...

AND YOU'VE BEEN UNHAPPY EVER SINCE.



MISERABLE! I KNOW NOW THAT CARL NEVER LOVED ME. I WAS HIS SUBJECT... HIS THOUGHT-PROJECTION RECEIVER... A PIECE OF APPARATUS... NOTHING MORE. BUT NOW I KNOW WHAT REAL LOVE IS... NOW THAT I'VE MET YOU.



HE WOULD NEVER LET YOU GO. WOULD HE?

NEVER! IF I DO, HIS ACT GOES. HE'S NEVER GIVE ME A DIVORCE. THERE'S NO USE MY ASKING!

THEN WE WILL RUN AWAY... JOIN ANOTHER CIRQUE. I HAVE HAD MANY OFFERS. AN ANIMAL TRAINER IS IN GREAT DEMAND.



THE WIND SIGHS ACROSS THE CIRCUS GROUNDS, WHISPERS AMONG THE TENT ROPES, GASPS AGAINST THE CANVAS... CARRYING THE SIGNS, THE WHISPERS, THE GASPS OF THE LOVERS IN THE SHADOWS... AND IN HIS TENT, CARL STIRS UNEASILY... OPENS HIS EYES...

MARTA, I. I. MARTA? MARTA?

HER BED? IT IS EMPTY! WHERE COULD SHE BE?



CARL SLIPS ON A ROBE AND COMES OUT OF HIS TENT... OUT INTO THE WHISPERING, SIGHING, GASPING WIND.

VOICES? COMING FROM BEYOND THE NEW ANIMAL TRAINER'S TENT...

HIS VOICE... AND MARTA'S!



CARL MOVED THROUGH THE MOON-LIT NIGHT... HIS EYES BURNING LIKE HOT COALS... LISTENING...

...AND AT THE END OF THE NIGHT WHEN I GET MY CHECK, WE WILL LEAVE. FODD AND I TOGETHER...

OH, YES... YES...



...LISTENING TO THE RAGGEDNESS IN HIS WIFE'S VOICE, THE PASSION, THE RUMOR...

...BUT LET'S NOT TALK ANYMORE, ERIC, DARLING. HOLD ME CLOSE...

SHOOT MARTA...



...AND THEN, SLOWLY, HE RETURNED TO HIS TENT ONCE MORE. HE HAD HEARD ENOUGH...

SHE... SHE HAD FALLEN IN LOVE WITH HIM. SHE IS LEAVING ME. SHE... I... I MUST STOP HER!

YES, NOW...



THE MOONLIGHT STREAMS THROUGH THE OPEN TENT-FLAP... FALLING ACROSS THE PRINT... BLACK LETTERS ON GOLD WHITE... THE LOCAL NEWSPAPER...

WHAT'S THIS? "BOOGIES DISMEMBERED AT LOCAL BRAVE YARD... TORN TO PIECES AS IF ATTACKED BY WILD BEAST?"



OF COURSE! "TORN TO PIECES BY WILD BEAST" THAT'S HOW I CAN STOP HER FROM LEAVING. THAT'S IT?





LATER, WHEN MARTA RETURNS FROM HER rendezvous, AND CRAMBLES BACK INTO BED, CARL, PRETEXTING HE IS ASLEEP...



ONLY AFTER MARTA HAS SLIPPED OFF INTO DEEP SLEEPER, DOES CARL STIR...AND RISE...AND SO OUT OF THE TENT...



...AND CROSS DIRECTLY TO THE NEW ANIMAL TRAINER'S TENT WITH GUN IN HAND...



HUH? WHO'S THERE? WHO...

GET UP! AND DON'T MAKE A SOUND!

ERIC STUMBLES TO HIS FEET...

WHAT'S THE MEANING? SO YOU OF THIS, CARL? PUT DOWN THAT GUN... WERE GOING TO RUN OFF WITH MY WIFE, ERIC? WELL, WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT! MORE!



CARL MOTIONS ERIC OUT OF THE TENT AND DOWN THE LONG SILENT MOUNTAIN TOWARD THE BIG TOP...



WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO, CARL?

I, ERIC? I'M NOT GOING TO DO ANYTHING! YOUR LION WILL DO THE WORK!

THEY CROSS THE TAMPARIAN FLOOR OF THE BIG TOP UNTIL THEY COME TO THE LION CAGE. THE TANNY BEAST PAGES BACK AND FORTH HUMBLY...



MY LION??

YES, ERIC. I'M GOING TO PUT YOU IN THE CAGE WITH HIM... WITHOUT YOUR RAMP, WITHOUT ANYTHING... JUST YOU AND YOUR LION!

WITHOUT MY RAMP? I'D BE HELPLESS... PARALYZED... UNABLE TO DEFEND MYSELF! FOR GOD'S SAKE, CARL! HAVE PITY!



PITY IS AN EMOTION BELONGING TO THE PITIFUL, ERIC. GET IN...

CARL SWINGS OPEN THE BARRIED DOOR AND PUSHES. ERIC SCREAMS AND GOES SPRAWLING. THE LION SWARLS.



AND THEN, THE CIRCUS GROUNDS ECHO WITH THE BLOOD-CURLING SHRIEKS OF A MAN BEING TORN TO SHREDS BY THE RAZOR SHARP FANGS OF A BLOOD-THIRSTY BEAST.



ERIC'S ANGUISHED SHRIEKS AWAKEN MARTA AND SHE LOOKS AROUND WILDLY...



CARL'S TENT IS EMPTY! OUTSIDE THE TENT, FOOTSTEPS POUND UP THE HIGHWAY TOWARD THE BIG-BOY MARTA SLIPS ON A ROBE AND BURSTS FROM THE TENT...



SHE RUNS WITH THE REST OF THEM UNTIL THEY COME TO THE LION TRAINER'S CAGE.



SHE SCREAMS HIS NAME TWICE, AND THEN SHE JUST STANDS THERE, WATCHING THE BEAST LICK AT THE SLASHED AND SHREDDED BODY UNTIL SHE HAS TO TURN AWAY AS THE MALLARD SWEEPS OVER HER...



AND THEN, SICK, SHE RETURNS TO HER TENT AND SITS AND WAITS, CRYING, UNTIL CARL COMES IN WITH THAT EVIL, GRIN ON HIS COLD IMPASSIVE FACE...



BUT THERE IS NO COURT IN MARTA'S MIND AS TO HOW ERIC DIED. CARL'S BED WAS EMPTY WHEN ERIC'S SCREAMS AWAKENED HER. THE SHEETS WERE GONE.

I HAVE YOU!  
HAVE YOU!

YOU WILL GET  
OVER IT, MARTA!



THE NEXT DAY'S PERFORMANCE IS CANCELLED BECAUSE OF THE TRAGEDY. THE TENTS ARE LOWERED. THE CIRCUS PREPARED TO MOVE ON...

LOOK DUFF CARL!



IT HAPPENS SUDDENLY. WITHOUT WARNING, CARL IS HELPING WITH THE DISMANTLING OF THE SH-TOP WHEN THE MAIN SUPPORT TOPPLES.

GOOD LORD!



THE HEAVY POLE CRUSHES DOWNWARD UPON CARL, CRUSHING HIM GENTLY AT ITS MASSIVE WEIGHT.



AND WHEN THE HUGE SUPPORT IS LIFTED, CARL LIES DEATHLY STILL. HIS GLAZED EYES STARE.

HE... HE'S DEAD!

TWO IN A ROW!  
THE CIRCUS IS  
JUNKED!

SOMEBODY  
GET HIS  
WIFE!



MARTA IS SUMMONED. SHE STANDS IMPASSIVELY OVER HER HUSBAND'S BODY, SHEDDING NO TEARS, SHOWING NO SIGN OF EMOTION...

IT... IT WAS AN  
ACCIDENT!  
MARTA! THE  
MAIN SUPPORT...

HE... HE WILL HAVE  
TO BE BURIED BEFORE  
WE CAN GO ON!



MARTA'S VOICE IS COOL, CALLOW, AS SHE ASKS

SOMEBODY SEND FOR AN  
UNDERTAKER...



MARTA LOOKS DOWN AT THE STILL FORM OF HER HUSBAND LYING ON THE TANGBARK FLOOR. AND EVEN THOUGH SHE READS HIS THOUGHTS, SHE SHOWS NO SIGN OF REGRETION...



MARTA! MARTA, I AM ALIVE! I'M NOT DEAD! MARTA! LISTEN TO ME! PLEASE! TRY TO HEAR WHAT I AM THINKING! I'M PARALYZED, MARTA! I'M NOT DEAD! I'M PARALYZED! I CAN SEE! I CAN HEAR! I CAN'T MOVE!

AS THE UNDERTAKER AND HIS ASSISTANT LIFT POOR CARL INTO THE WICKER, MARTA MOVES FORWARD.



MARTA! PLEASE! SAVE ME! I'M ALIVE! MARTA! I'M ALIVE! PARALYZED! NOT DEAD! PARALYZED! MARTA! PLEASE!

WAIT!



OH, MARTA! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

YES, MEXM?



PLEASE DON'T ENBALM HIM. BURY HIM AS HE IS, HE WOULD HAVE WANTED IT THAT WAY!

ANYTHING YOU SAY, MEXM?

MARTA! MARTA, NO!



MARTA LOOKS DOWN INTO PARALYZED EYES THAT CAN STILL SEE... WHISPERS INTO PARALYZED EARS THAT CAN STILL HEAR...

GOOD-BYE, CARL!

MARTA! OH, GOOD! MARTA...



AT THE FUNERAL, MARTA STANDS, HER FACE A GRANITE MASK, BESIDE THE TURNING PIT BELOW CARL'S COFFIN.

YOU CAN STOP THEM, MARTA! THERE'S STILL TIME! I KNOW YOU CAN HEAR ME. I KNOW IT! PLEASE! I BEG IF YOU DON'T LET THEM BURY ME ALIVE!

LOWER THE COFFIN!



AND EVEN THOUGH THE SOIL IS SHOVELED DOWN UPON THE COFFIN, CARL'S FRANTIC THOUGHT WIVES STILL COME THROUGH TO HER. TO HER AND ONLY HER: TO MARTA, WHO TURNS AND WALKS AWAY DOWN THE PATH LEADING OUT OF THE CEMETERY...

MARTA! DON'T DO THIS! PLEASE! SAVE ME! PLEASE! O LORD, MAKE HER SAVE ME!

CEMETERY

THE AFTERNOON WINDS, THE NIGHT BREEZE COMES UP, WHISPERING OVER THE GRAVE MOUNDS. SIX FEET BELOW, IN HIS COFFIN, CARL CONCENTRATES AS THE PRECIOUS OXYGEN SLOWLY DISAPPEARS...

MARTA! COME BACK! COME SAVE ME! I'LL DO ANYTHING! ANYTHING! WHY FIT ON ME! HAVE PITY!



THE STARS COME OUT, WHITE PIN-POINTS IN A VELVET SHADOW. A FIGURE MOVES OVER THE GRAVE MOUNDS...

I KNOW YOU ARE RECEIVING MY THOUGHTS, MARTA! I KNOW.



A SHOVEL DIGS INTO THE SOFT EARTH.

MARTA! MARTA, YOU DID COME! YOU DID!



THE DIGGING CONTINUES, THE SHOVEL SCOOPING AWAY THE SOFT EARTH. FINALLY THE LID OF THE COFFIN SWINGS BACK...

MARTA DARLING? I ON, LORD, YOU'RE NOT MARTA!



AND THEN AS CARL LIES HELPLESS, PARALYZED... LIKE A LION-TAMOR WITH-OUT A WHIP... FEELING THE RAZOR SHARP TEETH RIPPING AND TEARING AT HIS FLESH... UNABLE TO SCREAM AT THE EXCRUCIPATING PAIN, HE THINKS OF THE NEWSPAPER LYING IN THE MOONLIGHT. THE NEWSPAPER THAT FIRST GAVE HIM THE IDEA OF HOW TO KILL ERIC...

'BODIES DISINTERRED AT LOCAL GRAVE YARD FOUND TO PIECES AS IF ATTACKED BY SOME WILD BEAST!' OH, LORD! THEY WERE WRONG! THIS IS NO BEAST! IT'S A GHOUL!



HER, NOW? YEP, KIDDEST? CARL ENDED UP JUST LIKE ERIC... BEING FORN TO BITS AND UNABLE TO DEFEND HIMSELF, AS FOR MARTA... SHE READ CARL'S FINAL THOUGHTS, AND GOT QUITE A MENTAL PICTURE OF WHAT WAS GOING ON! JUST ONE MORE INCIDENT ON THIS WHOLE SUBJECT AS THE BOP

CEMETERY FORE-MAN KEEPS TELLING HIS WORK CREWS, 'DID THAT OR-ANY GRAVE?' WELL, Y.E. WANTS, DO. 'BYE, NOW!



# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

REVERENT SALUTATIONS, SLIME SAVORERS! NOW IT'S TIME FOR A JAUNT INTO THE VAULT OF HORROR. THIS IS YOUR HOST IN HORROR, THE HAULT-FEPPER, READY TO ENTERTAIN YOU IN C.E.'S MAG WITH A FAVORITE YUCK-YARN FROM MY CREEP-COLLECTION. SO HAVE THE SACRIFICE READY AND I'LL DOPPEL YOUR STOMACH WITH THE TUMMY-TURNER I CALL...

## PEARLY TO DEAD

OUR STORY BEGINS DURING WORLD WAR II, WHEN THE UNITED STATES MARINES WERE SLOWLY AND PAINFULLY INCHING ACROSS THE SOUTH PACIFIC AREA, INVASION AND BATTLES FOR EACH BLOODY STOLL, EACH JAPANESE-INFESTED CORAL ROCK. ONE DAY BLACK STARLESS NIGHT, A SMALL BOAT MOVED SILENTLY TOWARD THE CORAL REEF THAT RINGED THE PEACEFUL LAGOON OF ONE OF THESE JAPANESE-HELD ISLANDS. INSIDE, TWO MEN CROUCHED QUIETLY STUDYING THE DANCING FIRES ON THE SHORE ACROSS THE PLACID LAGOON.

BETTER DROP THE ANCHOR, PHIL. THIS IS ABOUT AS CLOSE IN AS WE DARE GO WITHOUT BEING SEEN.

RIGHT, LARRY.



THE ANCHOR SLID OVER THE SMALL BOAT'S REE AND DROPPED WITH A MUFFLED SPLASH INTO THE BLACK PACIFIC. THEN, STRANGEST, THE TWO MEN BEGAN TO UNDOSS...

WHILE I'M CLEARING THE BRUAL NETTING, YOU START SETTING THE DEMOLITION CHARGES, PHIL. CHECK?



THEY STOOD ALMOST NAKED IN THE PACIFIC NIGHT, MUSCLES RIPPLING. THEY BENT AND SLID THE WORDLY SHAPED BLACK RUBBER FLIPPERS ONTO THEIR FEET...PULLED THEIR RUBBER MASKS WITH THE ROUND GLASS WINDOWS OVER THEIR FACES...



READY? GOT THE CHARGES...TIMERS...FUSES?

RIGHT? GOT YOUR WIRE CLIPPERS...UNDERWATER LAMP...BACK-SART?

SILENTLY, THE TWO MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES NAVY'S UNDERWATER DEMOLITION TEAM...THE FABULOUS FROMER...SLID OVER THE SIDE OF THEIR SMALL BOAT AND INTO THE CHOPPY PACIFIC...



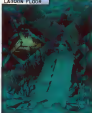
WELL, TAKE IT EASY, PHIL?

SEE YOU IN A WHILE, LARRY!

...AND WENT ABOUT THEIR BUSINESS...THE BUSINESS OF CLEARING THE WAY FOR THE INVASION OF THE FOLLOWING MORNING. THE ONE NAMED LARRY GLIDED DOWNWARD, FLICKING ON HIS LAMP, SEARCHING OUT THE TREASONOUS PROPELLER-SHATTERING STEEL NETTING...



...AS THE OTHER, THE ONE NAMED PHIL, SKIMMED BELOW THE SURFACE TO THE PILING SUNK IN THE LAGOON FLOOR



WITH THE NETTING CLIPPED AND SAVED AND OUT ANY AND FORTHWARD HARMLESS, LARRY SHOT TOWARDS PHIL TO HELP PLACE THE DEMOLITION CHARGES, HIS LANTERN BEAM RUNNING ACROSS THE SANDY BOTTOM OF THE LAGOON...



AND THEN, SUDDENLY, HE SAW IT...STRETCHING AWAY BELOW HIM IN THE GLOOMY MURKY DARKNESS...THE OYSTER BED...



AS LARRY CIRCLED OVER THE BED, STUDYING THE ABNORMALLY-LARGE SHELLED SEA CREATURES WITH THEIR PRICELESS GLOVED GEMS EMBEDDED IN THEIR GUMMING HEAVY BODIES, PHIL GLIDED TOWARD HIM, STARING WIDE-EYES.



THE TWO MEN SURFACED BESIDE THEIR BOAT, GASPING FOR BREATH...



DID YOU SEE IT, PHIL? THERE, GASP... THERE MUST BE A PORTAGE IN PEARLS IN THAT OYSTER BED! I'M GOING BACK... GASP... DOWN...

DON'T BE A FOOL, LARRY! I'VE SET THE CHARGES. C'MON! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!

MINUTES LATER, THE SMALL BOAT WAS HUMMING SEAWARD. BEHIND, THE DEMOLITION CHARGES EXPLODED IN THE FLACID LAGOON SIGNALING THE MIGHTY BATTLE BARRAGE OFFSHORE TO BEGIN THEIR BARRAGE. LARRY SCROO ABOVE THE OIL...



WE'LL COME BACK, PHIL! AFTER THIS CRAZY MESS IS OVER, WE'LL COME BACK FOR THOSE PEARLS! WE'LL BE BACK!

SURE, LARRY! SURE!

AT DAWN THE NEXT MORNING, THE ASSAULT BOATS STORMED THE QUIET LAGOON, AND PROPELLERS CHURNED BLOOD INTO THE WATERS ABOVE THE OYSTER BED...



THE BEACHHEAD WAS SECURED. THE DEMOLITION TEAM'S WORK WAS DONE. LARRY AND PHIL WERE SHIPPED ELSEWHERE TO OTHER ISLANDS, WITH OTHER LAGOONS...



THEY SAY THIS ATOM BOMB WROTE OUT A WHOLE CITY, PHIL. MAYBE THE JAPS'LL SURRENDER NOW. THEN...

C'MON! STOP DREAMIN' ABOUT THOSE PEARLS! HOW GET JUST?

V-J DAY! PEACE! IT CAME SUDDENLY... AFTER THE SECOND A-BOMB WAS DROPPED, THE JAPANESE ORDERED AN UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER AND THE WAR WAS OVER.



HEY, PHIL! SNIPPING ORDERS! WE'RE GOING HOME! WE'RE GETTING OUT!

LET'S SEE...

SAN FRANCISCO'S GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE CAME UP OUT OF THE MIST ONE MORNING. THE TROOPSHIP SLIPPED BENEATH IT AND MOVED IN TOWARDS A HIER WHERE BARDS PLAYED AND CHILDREN CHEERED AND WOMEN BOOED HAPPILY...



LOOK, PHIL! THERE'S GLADYS!

GLADYS? WHERE?

THEY CAME DOWN THE SANDPARK TOGETHER, SIDE BY SIDE, LARRY AND PHIL. BUT THE GIRL THAT WAITED WITH TEAR-STAINED CHEEKS HAD EYES FOR ONLY ONE OF THEM.



PHIL, CARLING...

GLADYS SAYS...

HEY, WHEN DOES AN ALIEN GO TO REGISTER?



LARRY TRIED TO HIDE THE JEALOUS ANGER...THE HURT THAT HE FELT. GLADY'S PREFERENCE HAD COME AS A GREAT SHOCK TO HIM...



I...I WANTED TO TELL YOU, LARRY! BUT... WELL... I...

I UNDERSTAND, GLADYS.

PHIL HAD WON AGAIN. IT HAD ALWAYS BEEN LIKE THAT EVER SINCE THEIR COLLEGE DAYS. THEY'D BOTH COME OUT FOR THE SWIM TEAM...



THAT'S GOOD TIME WASN'T IT? WHAT DID YOU SAY YOUR NAME WAS?

LARRY? LARRY MILLS!

LARRY'D DONE HIS BEST. BUT PHIL... PHIL HAD DONE JUST A LITTLE BIT BETTER.



CONGRATULATIONS, BOY! THAT BEATS MILES' TIME BY EIGHT TENTHS!

THE NAME'S PHIL CANNON, COACH!

LARRY AND PHIL HAD BECOME FAST FRIENDS IN COLLEGE. BUT THERE WAS ALWAYS THAT RIVALRY BETWEEN THEM...



COME ON, LARRY!

LET'S GO, PHIL!

MILES IS GREAT, AND CANNON IS BETTER. WE'VE GOT SOME SWIM TEAM THIS YEAR.

NOT ONLY IN THE POOL... BUT ALSO ON THE CAMPUS.



HEY, YOU TWO? I WANT YOU TO MEET GLADYS HART! GLADYS, MEET OUR TWO SWIM CHAMPS, LARRY MILLS AND PHIL CANNON.

VERY NICE! ARE YOU GUYS TORNIGHT, MISS HART?

SORRY, LARRY! MISS HARTY ALREADY HAS A DATE WITH ME!

WHEN GLADYS HAD COME INTO THEIR LIVES, THE RIVALRY BETWEEN THE TWO BOYS HAD INCREASED. THEY BOTH FALLER IN LOVE WITH HER.



GLADYS, YOU KNOW HOW I FEEL ABOUT YOU? SAY 'YES'... AND I'LL BUY YOU THE BIGGEST ENGAGEMENT RING IN THE STORE.

LARRY? I... I LIKE YOU... BUT... WELL, I JUST CAN'T MAKE UP MY MIND!

THEN, PEARL HARBOR, AND THE U.S. WAS IN A WAR. THE NAVY HAD COME TO LARRY AND PHIL... ASKED THEM TO JOIN THE UNDERWATER DEMOLITION TEAM. AND THEY'D ACCEPTED...



SO LONG, LARRY!

WRITES!

I WILL! GOOD-BYE, MOM! TAKE CARE.

AND NOW THEY WERE BACK FROM THE WAR, STANDING ON A JARRED PIER FULL OF RETURNED SAILORS AND SOLDIERS AND HAPPY LOVED ONES, AND PHIL HAD WON A WAR...



WE'RE... WE'RE... FROM PHIL GOING TO BE MARRIED, LARRY! I MEAN... WHAT ABOUT OUR BOSSNESS OUT THERE... IN THE PACIFIC?



IT'LL BE A LOVELY PLACE TO TAKE GLADYS ON OUR HONEYMOON, LARRY. OH, SURE! SURE! WELL, CONGRATULATIONS, YOU TWO!

DITCHWADGE! CIVILIAN CLOTHES AGAIN! FREEDOM FROM REGIMENTATION! DISCIPLINE! THEY WERE ALL LARRY'S NOW AND A SECRET, TOO! A MILLION DOLLAR SECRET! JUST ONE THING... ONE THING WENT NOT HIS, YES? GLADYS!



I PICKED UP THESE SURPLUS FLIPPERS AND MARKS, PHIL. I THOUGHT WE'D TRY THEM OUT TONIGHT. LOOK, FELLER! I'M GETTING MARRIED TOMORROW! HAVE A HEART!

LARRY CONVINCED PHIL THAT AFTER HE WAS MARRIED THERE'D BE NO CHANCE TO TRY OUT THEIR EQUIPMENT, AND PHIL RELUCTANTLY AGREED. THEY DROVE OUT TO A LONELY BEACH...



I PICKED THIS SPOT BECAUSE IT'S SO MUCH LIKE THAT LAGOON, PHIL! YEAH! IT... IT IS! WELL! LET'S GO!

LARRY HAD PLANNED IT ALL SO CAREFULLY! WITH PHIL DEAD, GLADYS, THE SECRET OF THE FEAR-BED... EVERYTHING... WOULD BE HIS...



LARRY? WHAT THE ? IT'S GOING TO BE SUCH A PITY, PHIL... A GOOD SWIMMER LIKE YOU IS DROWNING!

THEY STRUGGLED WILDLY, THERE IN THE FOAMING SURF OF THAT LONELY CALIFORNIA BEACH. LARRY HELD PHIL'S THROAT IN A VICE-LIKE GRIP, UNTIL PHIL'S BODY WENT LIMP AND LIFE LEFT IT AND IT SLIPPED FROM LARRY'S GRASP AND SANK BENEATH THE OCEAN WAVES...



AND LARRY CAME OUT OF THE WATER ALONE WITH A GRIM SMILE ON HIS FACE AND THE STORY HE'D TELL GLADYS SO CLEAR IN HIS MIND...



GLADYS LISTENED TO LARRY AS HE BOILED OUT THE STORY OF HOW THEY'D GONE SWIMMING. HE AND PHIL... AND PHIL'D GONE DOWN... AND...

...AND BEFORE I COULD GET TO HIM, HE WENT DOWN FOR GOOD. HE... HE MUST HAVE GOTTEN A CRAMP. I... I TRIED TO DIVE FOR HIM, BUT THE UNDERM...

NO! BOB... NO ON LORD!



IT WOULD TAKE TIME LARRY DECIDED. TIME FOR GLADYS TO FORGET PHIL. IN THE MEANWHILE, HE WOULD GO TO THE SOUTH PACIFIC... TO THE TINY ATOLL WITH ITS FABULOUS OYSTER BED... AND MAKE HIS FORTUNE...

I'LL BE BACK IN THREE MONTHS, GLADYS. PERHAPS, BY THEN, YOU WILL HAVE GOTTEN OVER THIS, AND MAYBE I, YOU AND I.

I'LL NEVER STOP LOVING HIM, LARRY! SOM' NEVER



THE TRIP TO THE ATOLL WAS LONG, BUT LARRY DIDN'T MIND IT. ONCE ON BOARD, HE LOST NO TIME IN MAKING FRIENDS...

BABY, YOU'RE THE MOST GORGEOUS GOLL ON THIS SHIP! I... I... BABY!

WELL... SO OK... DON'T JUST LEAVE ME HANGING!



WERE HIS EYES DECEIVING HIM? WAS THE FOAM AND THE SPRAY AND THE CHURRING WATER BESIDE THE SHIP PLAYING TRICKS ON HIM, OR DID HE ACTUALLY SEE THE BLISTERED WHITE BODY?



WHAT IS IT, LARRY?

THERE? IN THE WATER? I... I... NO! IT CAN'T BE! I MUST BE SEEING THINGS!

AND WAS THE FOUL GLOOM OF THE SEA AND DECAY AND ROTTING FLESH THAT BEARDED HIS NOSTRILS WHEN HE OPENED HIS CABIN DOOR THAT NIGHT JUST LARRY'S IMAGINATION?



CHUCK

WAS IT A DREAM? OR DID LARRY ACTUALLY SEE THE WHITE PULPY FISH-PITTED FACE IN THE PORTHOLE THAT NIGHT WHEN HE'D BEEN STARTLED OUT OF A SOUND SLEEP...



MUNT WHO...WHO... GOOD LORD!

AND WAS IT THE SEA, OR DID HE ACTUALLY HEAR THAT LAUGHTER... THAT HIPPLING BLOOD-CURDLING LAUGHTER COMING IN FROM THE MURKY FOG BEYOND THE SHIP THE NIGHT HE STROLLED THE DECK ALONE.



WHO...WHO'S OUT THERE?

THE SHIP DOCKED AT TAHITI AND LARRY LOST NO TIME IN HIRING A PLANE TO TAKE HIM SOUTH TO THE ATOLL.



CAN YOU LAND THIS CRATE IN A LAGOON?

I CAN DROP IT ON A CORAL MOUNTAIN!

ON THAT FLAME TRIP SOUTH... SWIMMING LOW OVER THE BLUE PACIFIC... WAS LARRY CRAFTY... OR DID HE SEE IT AGAIN... THERE JUST BELOW HIM... THAT ASHER, PUFFY, BLOATED FORM...



STUPID! MISTER CANNOT AIR DROPT

CHUCK, A LITTLE, I GUESS

THE ATOLL CAME UP... A PEARL AGAINST A BLUE BATH SEASIDE... GUARDING ITS OWN PEARL TREASURE. LARRY CANT HIS FEARS FROM HIS MIND WHEN HE SAW IT...



THERE IT IS! LAND IN THAT LAGOON!

RIGHT?

THE TINY SEAPLANE CAME DOWN GENTLY AND BAT BOBBING QUIETLY IN THE BLUE LAGOON AS LARRY UNPACKED HIS GEAR, REMOVED THE FLIPPERS AND THE RUBBER SLASH-WINDOWED MASK, AND BEGAN TO UNDOORS.



HEFF! WHAT'S GOING ON? YOU GONNA DIVE FOR SOMETHING?

YEP! THERE'S AN OYSTER BED IN THIS LAGOON... WITH PEARLS THE SIZE OF YOUR FIST AND I'M GOING TO GET ME A FEW...

TINY FISH SCATTERED BEFORE HIM AS LARRY SHOT DOWNWARD. HE PASSED THE OLD RUSTED NETTINGS... THE SUNKEN ASSAULT BOATS... THE WATER-LOGGED BLASTED FILINGS... AND THEN HE SAW IT... THE OYSTER BED. HE SWAM TOWARD IT... FASERIK...



LARRY WAS SO BUSY WRENCHING THE LARGEST OYSTER HE COULD FIND FROM THE SANDY BOTTOM THAT HE NEVER NOTICED THE PUTRID, SLIME, WHITE FORM DRIFT TOWARD HIM, AND WHEN ITS BLOATED ARMS CLOSED AROUND HIS NECK, AND THE ROTTED FACE GRINNED AT HIM, IT WAS TOO LATE...



POW... GORE... SLIME...

HEH, HEH! YEP, KIDDER! THAT'S MY YARN. THE *PROT* OF THE SEAPLANE WAITED AROUND FOR LARRY TO COME UP FOR *SEVERAL HOURS*. FINALLY, HE WHUNGED, WENT THROUGH LARRY'S PANTS, EXTRACTED THE MONEY FROM HIS WALLET, TORBESD THE REST OF LARRY'S GEAR INTO THE LAGOON, AND *TOOK OFF* AND YOU'LL TAKE OFF WHEN YOU READ THE *NEXT* *BAULT-KEEPER YARN!* HEH... HEH! NOW I'LL TURN YOU BACK TO *GR!* I'LL SEE YOU *NEXT* IN MY MAG, THE *VAULT OF HORROR!* *WFE!* E.G., THAT IS!



HERE'S A BUBBLY LITTLE TALE OF  
TITANIC TERROR! I CALL IT...

# PRAIRIE SCHOONER



MILDRED JACKSON FLUNG OPEN THE DOOR OF HER HOUSE AND BOHEALED WITH JOY. HE STOOD ON THE FLAT-STARVED FRONT PORCH, DRESSED RESPLENDENTLY IN HIS CAPTAIN'S UNIFORM, HIS FACE BRONZED FROM FORTY YEARS AT SEA. HIS EYES COLD AND SCORCHING, HIS MOUTH GRIN, HIS TWO SUIT CASES BESIDE HIM...

"EERA! EERA! WHY DIDN'T YOU WRITE ME YOU WERE COMING TO VISIT?" OH, EERA... IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN.

"HELLO, MILLY. GOT A PLACE FOR YER OLD SEA DOG BROTHER TO BUNK DOWN FOR A SPELL?"



MILLY LED EERA INTO THE PARLOR...

"THERE'S ALWAYS ROOM FOR YOU HERE, EERA. YOU KNOW THAT. HOW LONG WILL YOU STAY?"

"JUST A SPELL, MILLY. JUST TILL I DECIDE WHAT I'M GONNA DO NEXT. Y'SEE... THEY TOOK AWAY MY SHIP. THEY RETIRED ME."



"RETIRED... OH, EERA, I'M SO BORING."

"YER, MY DAYLIN' DAYS ARE OVER, MILLY. I'M A LAND-LUBBER, NOW. WELL, WHERE DO I STOW MY BEART?"



THAT WAS HOW EZRA JACKSON CAME TO LIVE WITH HIS SISTER MILLY. AT FIRST, MILLY WAS VERY HAPPY TO HAVE HIM. AFTER ALL, SHE WAS AN OLD MAID... AND EZRA WAS COMPANY. BUT AS TIME WENT ON, EZRA BEGAN TO DO STRANGE THINGS.



EZRA? WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT THROUGH YOUR SPY-GLASS?

HOW?

ONE NIGHT, MILLY WAS ROUSED OUT OF A SOUND SLEEP BY HEAVY PAINS SHAKING HER ROUGHLY...



WHY... WHAT'S WRONG? EZRA? WHAT IS IT?

GET UP, YOU LAZY SWINE. YOU'RE LATE FOR YOUR WATCH, AND IF YOU EVER DO THIS AGAIN, I'LL HAVE YOU THROWN IN THE BAY!

IT WAS OBVIOUS TO POOR MILLY THAT HER OLDER BROTHER WAS ILL... MENTALLY ILL. THE SHOCK OF BEING RETIRED HAD BEEN TOO MUCH FOR HIM. HIS MIND HAD SHATTERED. HE FANDED HIMSELF AT SEA AGAIN... THE HOUSE, HIS SHIP, AND SHE, HIS CARE...



YOU CALL THIS CLEAN? I WANT THIS DECK SCRUBBED TILL I CAN SEE MY REFLECTION! UNDERSTAND?

YES, EZRA!



I SAID WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT WITH YOUR SPY-GLASS?

NOTHING, MILLY! I WAS JUST WATCHING THAT SHIP ON THE HORIZON!



SHIP? BUT EZRA! THIS IS KANSAS! THERE AREN'T ANY SHIPS ON THE HORIZON. THERE ISN'T ANY WATER... FOR HUNDREDS OF MILES!

FROM THAT NIGHT ON, MILLY WAS FORCED TO "STAND WATCH" SHE HAD TO MOVE THROUGH THE HALLS OF THE OLD HOUSE FROM TWO A.M. TO DAWN, CARRYING A LANTERN AND SHOUTING



LOUDER, YOU BLITHERING IDIOT! LOUDER!

EVEN BELLS AND ALL'S BELL!



DON'T "EZRA" ME! IT'S "YES, CAPTAIN JACKSON!" REMEMBER THAT! NOW, GET TO WORK, YOU BLAZE RAT!

Y-YES, CAPTAIN JACKSON.

MILLY HAD BEEN A SCHOOL TEACHER IN HER YOUNGER YEARS. SHE'D WORKED HARD AND MANAGED TO SAVE A SMALL AMOUNT OF MONEY. SHE'D USED PART OF IT TO BUY THE HOUSE SHE NOW LIVES IN. THE REST, SHE'D INVESTED WISELY, AND SHE'D BEEN ABLE TO LIVE COMFORTABLY. BUT WITH EDNA'S ARRIVAL, HER MEAGER INCOME WAS NOT ENOUGH...



SO MILLY WAS FORCED TO EARN EXTRA MONEY TO AMMERTY THE SMALL INCOME SHE DERIVED FROM HER INVESTMENTS. SHE HAD TO TAKE IN WASHING...



EDNA STOOD IN THE CENTER OF THE GELLAR FLOOR, STARING ABOUT HIM WITH WIDE BLEAMING EYES...



EDNA CAME DOWN THE CELLAR STAIRS, SCREAMING...



MILLY WAS HELPLESS. SHE HAD NO OTHER CHOICE... EXCEPT, PERHAPS, TO HAVE EDNA PUT AWAY. SO SHE CALLED IN A CARPENTER... A PLUMBER...



EIRA STORMED ABOUT IN THE CELLAR, SHOUTING OUT HIS ORDERS...

RIP OUT THOSE WINDOWS, CLOSE 'EM UP, PUT UP FALSE WALLS. MANDARIN PANELED WALLS, NOT IN PORT HOLES. REAL PORT HOLES—THAT OPEN!

YES, MR. JACKSON

CAPTAIN JACKSON? PUT OCEAN SCENES BEHIND THE PORT HOLES. HANG SHIP'S LANTERNS AROUND. PUT IN A BUMP A GALLEY AHEAD MAKE EVERYTHING AUTHENTIC. THIS IS MY SHIP!

YES, CAPTAIN!



AND POOR MILLY WITHDREW HER LIFE'S SAVINGS FROM HER INVESTMENTS TO PAY FOR THE NONSENSE.

4,500... 3,000 DOLLARS. HERE YOU ARE, MR. SUMNER?

THANK YOU, MA'AM. I HOPE YOUR BROTHER IS HAPPY WITH THE JOB WE DID!



"BELOW" IN HIS SHIP'S QUARTERS, CAPTAIN JACKSON BELLOWED...

STAND BY TO CAST OFF, ENGINE ROOM, FULL SPEED ASTERN, ALL HANDS, MAY YOUR STATIONS... ON THE DOUBLE!



MILLY CAME "BELOW" CARRYING HER LAUNDRY BASKET FILLED WITH THE WASH SHE'D BEEN TAKING IN...

WHAT IN BLAZES ARE YOU COMING DOWN HERE WITH THAT?

I'VE GOT TO DO THE SHIP'S LAUNDRY, CAPTAIN. I'VE...



EIRA STRUCK OUT SAVAGELY...

YOU'LL DO THE LAUNDRY ON DECK, YOU SCALLION BEGGAR. GET OUT OF MY QUARTERS...

OWWWW!





WITH HER INVESTMENTS WIPED OUT AND THE INCOME FROM THEM GONE, MILLY HAD TO TAKE IN MORE WASH THAN SHE COULD HANDLE IN ORDER TO MEET EXPENSES. AND EZRA'S ABUSE BECAME WORSE AND WORSE...

"SCURVE OUT THAT HEAD YOU FO'G SLE DRUDGE!"

"Y-YES, CAPTAIN!"

POOR MILLY WOULD ESCAPE, EVERY CHANCE SHE COULD GET, AND LOCK HERSELF IN THE UPSTAIRS BATHROOM IN ORDER TO DO THE WASH IN THE TUB... AND AS SHE SCRUBBED, SHE WOULD LISTEN TO EZRA'S BRAYING AND RAVING...

"EASE THE HELM! GIVE 'ER MORE RUDDER! STEADY AS YOU GO! HARD APOFT! STEADY! STEADY GO!"

"SOO... JOO..."



ONE HOT SUMMER'S DAY, EZRA STOOD AT THE OPEN PORT HOLE, SHOUTING OUT AT THE SEA-SCAPE SCENE BEYOND...



"ANDY? ANDY THERE? SHIP ANDY? HOLD FAST... STAND BY!"

WHILE UPSTAIRS, DIRECTLY OVER-HEAD IN THE BATHROOM, MILLY PANTED OVER A LOAD OF WASH...



THE HOT WATER, RUNNING INTO THE TUB OVER THE SOAKING CLOTHES, SENT UP CLOUDS OF STEAM WHICH FILLED THE LOCKED BATHROOM.



SUDDENLY MILLY CLUTCHED AT THE EXCRUCIATING PAIN IN HER CHEST, TOPPLING OVER...



AND AS HER HEART FAILED AND HER LIFE FADED WITH IT, THE BOILING WATER OVERFLOWED THE TUB, POOLING ABOUT HER PROSTRATE BODY, SINKING THROUGH THE BATHROOM FLOOR...



IN HIS CELLAR SHIP'S QUARTERS, CAPTAIN JACKSON LISTEN AS THE WATER, LEAKING DOWN FROM THE OVERFLOWING BATHING ABOVE, FILLED THE SPACE BETWEEN THE FALSE MAHOGANY PANELED WALLS AND THE FOUNDATION OF THE HOUSE.



THE CELLAR FILLED WITH STEAM. CAPTAIN JACKSON STAGGERED TO THE PORT HOLES, BLANNNED THEM SHUT. THE PRESSURE OF THE WATER CRUMBBLED THE PANELED WALLS...



...UNTIL THE BURNING HOT WATER REACHED HIS CHIN...HIS NECK...POURED INTO HIS MOUTH AND STEWED HIS TONGUE...HIS THROAT...HIS LUNGS...



SUDDENLY, THE WATER BEGAN TO POUR THROUGH THE OPEN PORT HOLES...



SLOWLY THE WATER ROSE IN THE CELLAR, BOILING, SCALDING, BLISTERING EZZA'S ASED BODY, BUT HE STUBBORNLY STOOD FAST...



HEE, HEE! YEP, KIDDIES. THAT'S MY MORRID MARINE OFFERING. EZZA FINALLY ENDED UP... IN HOT WATER! THIS IS THE FIRST CASE ON RECORD BY THE WAY, OF A CAPTAIN GOING DOWN WITH HIS SHIP IN THE MIDDLE OF A KANSAS PRAIRIE... IN A CELLAR AND NOW, I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE OLD WITCH, WHO IS WAITING TO WIND UP MY PEEL. EAT! REMEMBER! IF YOU'RE A FAN... AND AN ADDICT... YOU'RE AN... E.E. FAN-ADDICT! WHEN 'TYS, NOW!



# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEH! AND NOW, IT'S MORBID-MEAL-TIME. WELCOME TO THE HAUNT OF FEAR, CREEPS. THIS IS YOUR REVOLTING RESTAURATEUR, THE OLD WITCH, READY TO SLING SLIME...AND WIND UP C.U.'S MUCK-WAB FOR THIS SQUIDID ISSUE. CARE FOR SOME SEA FOOD? WELL, HERE'S A TASTY TERROR TID-BIT TO TURN YOUR STOMACH. I CALL THIS SLOP-SERVING...

## HALF-BAKED!

CAULIN DUGAN STOOD IN THE SPOTLESS KITCHEN OF 'THE SEA SHELL RESTAURANT' STARRING IN MORBID FASCINATION AT THE SCURMING, SLUG-GREEN, SPINER-LEGGED CLAWED CREATURE THAT SCRATCHED GRILLY AROUND AT THE BOTTOM OF THE BUTTER TUB. CAUTIOUSLY, HE REACHED IN AND PULLED ONE OF THEM FROM THE TUB, HOLDING IT UP. HE LAUGHED BRUTALLY.

"YOU'RE HEFF, YOU DISGUSTING THING. NOW, NOW! DON'T STRUGGLE! IT'S NO USE! HEH, HEH!"

CAULIN REACHED FOR A KNIFE. HE PLACED THE STRUGGLING LOBSTER, BELLY UP ON THE HUGE WOODEN KITCHEN TABLE AND GRINNED DOWN AT IT.

"FIRST, WE SPLIT YOU OPEN... FROM HEAD TO TAIL... LIKE SO..."



THE LOBSTER SQUIRMED. CALVIN FORCED THE KNIFE BLADE AGAINST ITS SOFT-SHELLED UNDERSIDE AND, WITH A SLIGHT SAWING MOTION, CRUNCHED IT THROUGH THE LOBSTER, NOW PRACTICALLY SEVERED IN HALF. STILL WRIGGLING ITS SPINY LEGS AND WAVED ITS HUGE CLAWS AWARDARDY.



CALVIN MOVED THE THRASHING SPLIT LOBSTER ONTO A PLATE AND SLID IT INTO THE STOVE, BELOW THE LICKING BLUE FLAMES OF THE BURNER.



CALVIN STARED INTO THE STOVE AT THE BROILING LOBSTER. HIS EYES GLINTED ALMOST MANICALLY AS HE WATCHED ITS STRUGGLING AGONY.



CALVIN GRINNED...  
I MUST LOWER THE FLAME SO THAT THE HEAT ONE WILL DIE SLOWER!



BEHIND CALVIN, THE RESTAURANT'S CHIEF SHOOK HIS HEAD AS HE WATCHED HIS EMPLOYEE.



CALVIN'S FACE GROW GRIM AS HE TURNED TO HIS CHIEF...



A LOBSTER IS HIDEOUS... UNLIT IT DESERVES TO SUFFER, JOHN. ITS OWN HELPLESS MERITS IN UGLY DEATH...



MEANWHILE, AT THAT VERY MOMENT, A FEW MILES UP THE BEACONST FROM THE SEA SHELL RESTAURANT, A FISHERMAN GUIDES HIS INBOARD OVER THE TROUBLED OCEAN SWEDS TO A CORK FLOAT FROM WHICH FLEW A TATTERED FLAG.



THE FISHERMAN PULLED UP BESIDE THE BOBBING MARKER AND PULLED IT INTO HIS SEA SKIFF, SLOWLY, TEDIIOUSLY, HE HAULED IN THE DRIPPING LINE, THAT WAS FASTENED TO THE CORK FLOAT...



FINALLY, THE LOBSTER TRAP SURFACED, AND THE FOUL SCENT OF THE FISH HEAD, PLACED WITHIN IT AS BAIT, REARED THE FISHERMAN'S NOSETHILLS...



SADLY, THE FISHERMAN GUIDED HIS INBOARD BACK TO THE BEACH WHERE A WOMAN AND CHILD STOOD IN THE DOORWAY OF A WIND-SCARRED SHACK, WAITING.



THE FISHERMAN ENTERED HIS DINY SHACK AND SAT DOWN WEARILY...

THE CHILD BEGAN TO CRY.



THE SEA SNAIL RESTAURANT WAS NOTED FOR ITS BROILED LOBSTER. PEOPLE CAME FROM MILES AROUND TO FEAST ON THE SACCULANT WHITE MEAT DIPPED IN BUTTER SAUCE. CALVIN DUGAN DID A THRIVING BUSINESS.

THE LOBSTER WAS ESPECIALLY FASTY TODAY, MR. DUGAN.

THANK YOU, MR. HINES. GOOD EVENING, COME AGAIN.



AFTER CLOSING TIME THAT NIGHT, JOHN, THE CHEF, REMINDED CALVIN...

WE'RE GETTING LOW ON LOBSTERS, MR. DUGAN. IF WE HAVE A GOOD CROWD TOMORROW, WE'LL RUN OUT!

I'LL PICK SOME UP IN THE MORNING ON THE WAY IN! GOOD-NIGHT, JOHN.



JOHN HODES AND LEFT. CALVIN LISTENED AS THE CAR MOTOR ECHOED AWAY INTO THE NIGHT, THEN TURNED TO THE ALMOST EMPTY TUB...

AFTER A WHILE, CALVIN LEFT THE RESTAURANT. HE LOOKED UP CAREFULLY, BUT HE DID NOT GET INTO HIS CAR. INSTEAD, HE WALKED DOWN TO THE BEACH...

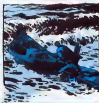
HE MOVED DOWN THE BEACH TO WHERE A SEA SKIFF WAS MOORED. UNTYING IT, CALVIN PUSHED THE CRAFT INTO THE ONCOMING BREAKERS.



HODES, DISGUSTING CREATURES!



BLAST IT! THERE'S A MOON OUT TONIGHT WELL, I'LL HAVE TO CHANGE IT.



THE INBOARD MOTOR COUGHED AND SPUTTERED, THEN BEGAN TO HUM EVENLY. CALVIN GUIDED THE SKIFF OUT INTO THE OPEN SEA...

A FEW MILES OUT HE PULLED UP BESIDE A ROBBING MARKER FROM WHICH A TATTERED FLAG FLAPPED.



AMBROSE, THE LOBSTER FISHERMAN, FACED THE FLOOR OF HIS DINY SHACK. LUCK, HIS WIFE, WATCHED HIM WITH SAD EYES.



COME TO BED, AMBROSE. YOU MUST GET UP EARLY.

I AM NOT SLEEPING. I AM THINKING ABOUT MY LOBSTER POTS.

AMBROSE STOPPED PACING. HE LISTENED. FAR AWAY, OVER THE ROAR OF THE SURF POUNDING THE NEARBY BEACH, AMBROSE HEARD A SOUND... A DULL HAMMING SOUND.



A SEA SKIFF. OUT THERE IN THE MOONLIGHT. IS THAT'S IT?

WHAT IS IT, AMBROSE?

AMBROSE POINTED OUT TO SEA. OUT TO THE DISTANT TOSSED SWELLS.



SOMEONE'S OUT THERE. THAT'S WHY MY LOBSTER POTS ARE ALWAYS EMPTY. SOMEONE IS STEALING MY LOBSTERS.

AMBROSE WAIT!

AMBROSE WAS OUT OF THE DOOR OF HIS WEATHER BEATEN SHACK IN A FLASH.



AMBROSE! COME BACK!

I'LL GET HIM, LUCK! I'LL GET HIM!

FAR OUT ON THE MOONLIT WAVES, CALVIN OGDEN LIFTED A LOBSTER POT INTO HIS SEA SKIFF.



TWO BEAUTIES! THAT'S SEVENTEEN ALREADY. AND I'VE ONLY RAISED HALF OF HIS TRAP.

SUDDENLY CALVIN LOOKED UP. SCARCELY ONE HUNDRED YARDS AWAY, ANOTHER SEA SKIFF GLIDED TOWARD HIM SILENTLY.



IT'S THE LOBSTER FISHERMAN. HE MUST HAVE MOVED OUT. THAT'S WHY I DIDN'T HEAR HIM! I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE!

CALVIN STRUGGLED WITH HIS HUSBAND, TRYING TO START IT. THE OTHER SEA SKIFF PULLED ALONGSIDE, THE FISHERMAN IN IT LANDED AT HIM WITH BURNING EYES.



SO? NO WONDER MR. OGDEN HADN'T BOTHERED TO STOP BY LATELY TO SEE IF I HAVE ANY LOBSTERS TO SELL. HE KNEW!

KEEP AWAY! AMBROSE! KEEP AWAY! I'LL MARCH YOU!

AMERBROE SMARLED...



**YOU BELY THIEF!  
YOU MISERABLE MONSTER!**  
MY CHILD HAS GONE  
WITHOUT MYLIF AND  
MEAT AND CLOTHES  
BECAUSE OF YOU!

**I'LL PAY  
YOU,  
AMERBROE!  
I'LL PAY  
YOU,**

AMERBROE SCREAMED...



**PAY ME!! NEVER!  
I'M GOING TO REPORT  
YOU TO THE POLICE.  
THEY'LL THROW  
YOU IN JAIL, WHERE  
YOU BELONG!**

**DON'T BE  
A FOOL,  
AMERBROE!  
I'LL PAY  
YOU WELL  
TO FORGET  
THIS!**

**NO! I WON'T TAKE  
YOUR MONEY! IT'S  
JAIL FOR YOU...  
JAIL...**

**YOU  
FORCE  
ME TO DO  
THIS,  
AMERBROE!**



THE KNIFE BLADE IN CALVIN OUSEN'S HAND  
GLINTED IN THE MOONLIGHT...



**NOW, I'LL HAVE TO KILL YOU,  
AMERBROE... TO KEEP YOU  
FROM TALKING...**

AMERBROE'S SHIRTS EDGED ACROSS THE HEAVING WATER  
AS CALVIN PLUNGED THE KNIFE INTO HIS WHITING BODY  
AGAIN AND AGAIN...



THEN, CALVIN LASHED AMERBROE INTO HIS SEA SKIFF...

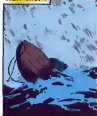


...AND CHOPPED A HOLE IN THE FLOORBOARDS, LETTING  
THE SEA WATER IN.





SLOWLY, THE BOAT, WITH ANDROS'S BODY, SANK BOLDLY THE TOSSEING OCEAN WAVES...



CALVIN STARTED HIS ENVOYED AND GUIDED HIS SEA-SKEFF BACK TO THE BEACH...



...AND LOADED THE BUTTERTUB WITH THE STOLEN LOBSTERS INTO HIS CAR TRUNK...



HE'D STARTED HOME...ROARING DOWN THE COAST ROAD AT BREAKNECK SPEED...WHEN THE BLOW-OUT OCCURRED...



AS CALVIN'S LURCHING CAR SPUN OVER, THE STEERING WHEEL SHATTERED, RIPPING INTO HIS BODY...TEARING SLASHING...



HE LAY THERE, PINNED, SCOURGING, HIS BODY ALMOST SPLIT IN TWO, AS THE OVERTURNED CAR CAUGHT FIRE AND THE FLAMES LICKED AT HIM AND HE SCREAMED AND BURNED AND WAS BURNED ALIVE...



HIE, HIE! THAT'S MY STORY, KIDDER! CALVIN ENDED UP LIKE THE LOBSTERS HE'S BEEN STEALING. WHEN I CAME UPON HIS BURNING CAR, HE WAS JUST ABOUT DONE. I WAS SO MAD THERE WASN'T A DROP OF BUTTER SAUCE AROUND! AND TALKING ABOUT SAUCE, YOU'D BETTER HURRY UP AND JOIN US E.G. FAN-ADDICTS! BUT REMEMBER, MEMBERSHIP IS LIMITED TO 150,000,000 PEOPLE. SO DON'T LOSE OUT! GET BACK ISSUES OF OUR PERVERTED PERIODICALS



AND WRITE TO THE CREEP-KEEPER AND LET HIM KNOW WHAT YOU THINK OF OUR BOOK. FOR DETAILS, READ C.K.'S COLUMN!



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# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH... AND HEH? (JUST TO BE DIFFERENT.) CRAWL INTO THE DREEPY OLD GRUDDY CRYPT OF TERROR, FRIENDS. THIS IS YOUR GHOSTLY HOST, LE CRYPT-KEEPER... YOUR MASTER OF GEMETERES... READY TO THRILL YOU, CRAWL YOU, AND KILL YOU WITH A SLIMY SELECTION FROM MY FRENCHISH FILE OF FOUL FANCIES. READY? WELL, HE'RE GOES WITH THE POW! PARN I CALL...

## OPERATION FRIENDSHIP



SMILING WARMLY, DOCTOR ANDREW HOBART SETTLED HIMSELF IN HIS FAVORITE CHAIR. A SIGH OF DEEP CONTENTMENT CAME FORTH AS HE FILLED HIS PIPE, LIT A DANCING FLAME, AND PUFFED BLUE SPIRALS TOWARD THE CEILING. IT WAS A RITUAL HE'D OBSERVED FOR LONG YEARS NOW... UNCOUNTED EVENINGS' WITH HIS FRIENDS. TURNING SLOWLY, THE DOCTOR OPENED THE CONVERSATION...

COMFORTABLE, PHILIP? NOW LET'S RELAX AND ENJOY OUR CHESS GAME... JUST YOU AND I... AS WE'VE DONE THESE PAST TWENTY-ODD YEARS. AH... THESE *QUET EVENINGS* TOGETHER, PHILIP. THEY'RE ALL WE HAVE LEFT...

DOCTOR ROBERT PLACED THE CHESSBOARD ON THE LOW TABLE BEFORE HIM...

OTHERS WANT SCOFF, PHIL, BUT I SAY OURS IS ONE OF LIFE'S RARITIES... A PERFECT FRIENDSHIP... A BOND OF THE MINDS... A MENTAL MATING FAR MORE LASTING AND REWARDING THAN THAT OF MAN AND WIFE.



THE OLD DOCTOR WENT ON EAR-RUDELUSLY, ALWAYS THE MORE TALKATIVE OF THE TWO, HARDLY GIVING THE OTHER A CHANCE TO SPEAK. HIS VOICE DRIPPED ON... RICH WITH BELLOW MEMORIES... NOSTALGIC REMINISCENCE...



YES, PHILIP! TWENTY YEARS OF THIS! REMEMBER NOW IT ALL BEARS, PHILIP! NOW, AS KIDS, OUR FAMILIES MOVED NEXT DOOR TO EACH OTHER! REMEMBER?

'REMEMBER NOW, LIKE ALL KIDS, WE WERE SHY AT FIRST, BUT QUICKLY WARMED UP... FOUND THAT WE LIKED THE SAME THINGS.'

BOSH, AND? I LIKE YOU.

I LIKE YOU TOO, PHIL. LET'S BE PALS FOR LIFE... AND SEAL IT IN BLOOD...



'A KID'S PUNNY NO. IT WAS MORE THAN THAT, PHIL! IT WAS A PACT OF DEVOTION THAT NOTHING HAS BEEN ABLE TO TEAR ASART IN ALL THESE YEARS! NOTHING!'

GIVE YOUR NAME, PHIL. WE'LL BE BUNDLES FOREVER...

TILL WE'RE OLD MEN AND READY TO DIE ANDY...



'REMEMBER, PHIL? REMEMBER HOW INSEPARABLE WE WERE... PLAYING TOGETHER... SOME PLACES TOGETHER, FIGHTING TOGETHER... TWO OF US AGAINST THE WORLD.'

YOU ARE BULLY! DON'T EVER POKE ON MY PAL PHIL AGAIN, O'YHEART?

DEAF! DEAF! I SWE UP! I PROMISE! OHHHHH...

NOH... NOH...



'REMEMBER, PHILIP? WE WERE A MODERN JAMBO AND PYTHIAS, AND AS WE GREW OUT OF BOYHOOD, WE BECAME EVEN CLOSER, IF ANYTHING. REMEMBER, IN HIGH SCHOOL, HOW EVEN THE PRETTIEST GIRLS FAILED TO PULL US APART?...

SORRY JOAN! PHIL AND I ARE GOING TO THE MOVIES OURSELVES TONIGHT... TOGETHER!

I WON'T ASK YOU AGAIN, ANDREW ROBERT! YOU'RE... YOU'RE NOT HUMAN!



'NONE OF THE GIRLS UNDERSTOOD, PHIL. THEY COULDN'T THEIR CHEAP THRILLS OF DATING AND PETTING WERE AS CANNIBAL TO THE PLAYING ECSTASY OF OUR EMBRACING MINDS.'

I'VE DECIDED ON MEDICINE, PHIL! WHY DON'T YOU STUDY IT WITH ME?

SORRY ABOUT ELECTRONICS IS MY HEAT!



"COLLECTED THE SAME COLLEGE, OF COURSE, NATURALLY, WE COULD NOT BE EXACTLY ALIKE IN ALL THINGS. I PROMISED LIVING MECHANISMS AND YOU PROMISED COLD LIFELESS ONES. BUT EVEN HERE, WE FOUND COMMON GROUND."

IT'S A WELL KNOWN FACT THAT THE BRAIN EMITS ELECTRIC IMPULSES, PHIL. WHY DO YOU ASK?

I WAS JUST WONDERING, ANDY. SUPPOSE WE COULD CAPTURE THOSE IMPULSES AND REPRODUCE THEM INTO AUDIBLE BOUNDS... ELECTRONICALLY.

REMEMBER HOW WE WORKED TOGETHER ON YOUR THEORY, PHIL? THE CRAZY MACHINE WE BUILT. REMEMBER THAT SOUND... HOW WE KEPT IT ALIVE IN THE BRINE WATER... ATTACHING THE ELECTRODES TO ITS HEAD?

LISTEN, ANDY! LISTEN!

GAHHHKK! WEEEEEKK!

IT WORKS, PHIL! IT WORKS!

"WE USED THOSE CLEVER SACRIFICE FOR OUR COMBINED DOCTORATE THESIS. WE KNOCKED 'EM DEAD, DIDN'T WE PHIL... GRADUATED WITH TOP HONORS."

CONGRATULATIONS, ANDY!

CAME TO YOU, PHIL?

"AND WENT OUT INTO THE WORLD TOGETHER. REMEMBER HOW WE FOUND THOSE TWO OFFICE SIDES BY SIDE? I HUNG OUT MY A.D. SHIRTLE AND YOU HUNG OUT YOUR ELECTRONIC ENGINEER'S SHIRT."

READY FOR LUNCH, PHIL?

LET'S GO...

DOCTOR ANDREW HOBART STUDIED THE CHESSBOARD BEFORE HIM AS IF HE WERE CONTEMPLATING THE MOVE HE'D HAD IN MIND WHEN THEY'D LEFT OFF THE PREVIOUS NIGHT...

WE BOTH MADE OUR MARKS, PHIL! YOU IN ELECTRONIC PATENTS... I IN SURGERY. AND ALWAYS, FROM THOSE FIRST YEARS, LIKE NOW, WE SPENT EVERY EVENING TOGETHER, OUR FRIENDSHIP CEMENTING ITSELF FIRMER EACH YEAR. REMEMBER?

"AND THEN CAME THOSE AWFUL WEEKS. I STILL SHUDDER AT THE MEMORY, PHILIP. I KNEW SOMETHING WAS WRONG. I FELT IT EVERY EVENING YOU CAME MORE AND MORE MOODY..."

I CAN'T MAKE IT TOMORROW NIGHT, ANDY! SOMETHING CAME UP!

SURE, PHIL! I UNDERSTAND.

"YOU STOPPED COMING. FIRST YOU SKIPPED ONE DAY A WEEK, THEN TWO. THEN YOU HARDLY CAME AT ALL. I HAD TO KNOW WHY..."

WHAT'S WRONG, PHIL? I CAN FEEL SOMETHING STRANDING BETWEEN US! WHAT IS IT? TELL ME! I MUST KNOW!

HOW CAN I TELL YOU, ANDY? I... IT ISN'T EASY!



YOUR HESITATION, YOUR AVERTED EYES, A COLD CHILL, SHIPPED ME AND I STEELED MYSELF FOR THE SHOCK OF WHAT I COULD ALMOST SUSSE.

Oh... I'm in LOVE, AMOI!

No, Phil...

YOU WENT ON, NOT KNOWING HOW EACH WORD WHIP, ASKED MY FLINCHING SOUL...

HER NAME IS JONORA! HERE, HERE'S HER PICTURE! DIDN'T SHE PRETTY?

Very... lovely, Phil!

I'M GOING TO MARRY HER, ANDY!

MARRY? BUT PHIL! OUR... OUR FRIENDSHIP... AFTER ALL THESE YEARS... YOU'LL BE BREAKING IT UP...

PLEASE, ANDY, DON'T MAKE ME FEEL LIKE A DOG! AFTER ALL... I AM SETTING ALONE IN YEARS! I'M ALMOST THIRTY! IT'S HORRIBLE FOR A MAN MY AGE TO WANT A WIFE... A HOME... ~~XXXX~~ AND OUR FRIENDSHIP ISN'T BREAKING UP, YOU'LL LIKE JONORA, AND...

NO, PHIL! IT WON'T BE THE SAME WITH YOU MARRIED! YOU CAN'T DO IT! LISTEN TO ME

"REMEMBER HOW I PLEADED WITH YOU, PHILIP! ANNOYED... NAYED... STORMED... BROVELED ON BENDED KNEES..."

PHIL, YOU CAN'T CAST ASIDE OUR FRIENDSHIP LIKE AN OLD SHOE, IT'S TOO SACRED! MARRIAGE IS FOR OTHERS, NOT FOR US, WITH OUR WEDDED BOND! PHIL, I SEE IN YOU... GIVE THIS CREATURE UP!

I'M... SORRY, ANDY...

YOU TURNED A STONEY HEART TO YOUR OLD FRIEND, PHILIP, AND THEN, ONE DAY, YOU BROUGHT JONORA TO MEET ME. SHE WAS LOVELY, ALL RIGHT, ON THE OUT-SIDE! BUT A MENTAL MONSTER WITHIN...

THIS IS ANDREW HOBART, JONORA!

SEE, PHILLY'S TOL' ME ALL ABOUT! FUN, DOO, HE SAYS YOU'RE REAL SMART.

YOUR FIANCEE EXAMBER— AFTER, JONORA! IT IS PHILIP WHO IS THE SMARTER OF THE TWO OF US!

PHILLY? SMART? AN, S'WONT HE'S BIG AN HAND-SOME AN... AND HE CAN PLAY A MEAN GAME OF TENNIS, BUT SMART? REALLY? YER KIDDIN'! PHILLY? YOU SMART?

"AFTER YOU AND JONHRA LEFT, I  
CRIED PHILIP, NO, NOT FOR ME AND  
MY LONELINESS... BUT FOR YOU!"

"BOW... THAT GIRL! THAT... JOB...  
FEELING! ALL SHE WANTS OF HIM  
IS A PLAYMATE AND A LOVER...  
NO PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES...  
WHILE HIS FINE MIND GOES TO  
WASTE!"



"WEDDING BELLS TOLLED HAPPY-  
NESS FOR YOU, PHILIP... JERSEY  
FOR ME. I WAS YOUR BEST MAN,  
OF COURSE, BUT NO LONGER YOUR  
BEST FRIEND... CLOSEST COM-  
PANION..."

"I'LL LOVE  
ANYONE!"

"BYE,  
GO-EE  
SEE  
YUH."

"GOOD-BYE,  
PHIL...  
CHORE..."



"AND THEN I SAT ALONE, PHILIP.  
EVENING AFTER EVENING... LISTENING  
TO THAT ANGUISH SILENCE... STARRING AT  
YOUR EMPTY CHAIR..."

"PHIL! COME BACK TO  
ME. SOB... SOB... PHIL..."



"THOSE BITTER LONELY HOURS, PHILIP... DRAGGING  
ME... EACH AN ETERNITY... UNTIL I COULD STAND  
IT NO MORE. I WAS READY TO TAKE MY LIFE,  
PHILIP... READY TO SLIT MY THROAT WITH ONE OF  
MY OWN RAZOR-SHARP SCALPERS, WHEN..."

"THE... ONLY... WAY...  
OUT... CHORE..."



"THAT PHONE CALL SAVED ME, PHILIP. IT ALSO SAVED YOU.  
IT WAS THE HOSPITAL. AN EMERGENCY OPERATION. MAJOR  
LOBOTOMY. IT WAS WHILE I WAS REMOVING THAT DISEASED  
PORTION OF THE PATIENT'S BRAIN THAT IT CAME TO ME..."

"OF COURSE! THE REAL WAY OUT! THE NOBLEST,  
MOST SENSIBLE WAY OUT..."



"I FITTED UP MY BASEMENT WITH EQUIPMENT... MADE  
MYSELF AN EXPERIMENTAL LABORATORY... STARTED MY  
RESEARCH... LOST MYSELF IN MY WORK..."

"LOBOTOMIES HAVE CUT AWAY  
WHOLE PORTIONS OF THE BRAIN  
THAT WERE DISEASED... ROTTED...  
TUMORED. THE PART OF THE BRAIN  
THAT WAS LEFT CONTINUED TO  
CARRY ON THE BODY PROCESSES..."



"I... SPENT TWO YEARS TRACKING DOWN THE ANSWER... AND  
THEN I FOUND IT AND MY CHANCE CAME WHEN YOU CALLED  
ONE DAY..."

"WHAT? OH, I'M SORRY TO HEAR THAT, PHIL! YOU'RE  
NOT GOING WITH HER? THEN WHY NOT COME HERE  
AND SPEND THE TWO WEEKS WITH ME? GOOD!  
I'LL EXPECT YOU, THEN! GOOD-BYE..."



THAT WAS A GREAT, WASN'T IT, PHILIP? JOSEFA HAVING TO GO HOME FOR TWO WEEKS DUE TO AN ILLNESS IN THE FAMILY! IT CAME AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME. I WAS READY...

YOUR MOVE, ANDY? HEH, HEH. JUST LIKE OLD TIMES, EH?

I... I SEE THE SIGNS, PHIL! YOUR MARRIAGE IS FALLING ON YOUR JOSEFA. SURELY YOU, DON'T SHE...?

'REMEMBER HOW YOU TURNED ON ME, ANDY?...

ARE YOU MAD, ANDY? WHERE DO YOU GET SUCH A CRAZY IDEA? I LOVE HER. EVEN IF SHE ISN'T SO BRILLIANT! SHE'S FUN, ANDY! I'VE NEVER BEEN SO HAPPY...

POOR Loyal PHILIP! YOU DON'T WANT TO HURT HER, DO YOU? YOU DON'T WANT TO CAST HER ASIDE LIKE THE TRASH SHE WAS FOR WASTING YOUR LIFE... SUFFOCATING YOUR WONDERFUL MIND IN GREARY TRIVIALITIES. WELL, YOU DIDN'T POOL ME, PHILIP. I FITTED YOU, IF FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART...

'AND I SAVE YOU WARNINGS, AS ONE FRIEND TO ANOTHER...'

IF YOU KEEP UP WITH THAT WOMAN... LET HER DRAG YOU DOWN TO HER MORNING DEPTHS... YOU WILL BE DEGRADING YOURSELF!

STOP IT, ANDY! THAT'S ENOUGH! EITHER WE DROP THE SUBJECT OR...

'TOO BAD, PHILIP! TOO BAD YOU WERE SO STUBBORN! IF I'D ONLY CONVINCED YOU...'

ALL RIGHT, PHILIP! NO NEED TO GET ANDY! THE SUBJECT IS CLOSED!

YOU MENTIONED SOMETHING ABOUT SOME EXPERIMENTS YOU'VE BEEN DOING, ANDY!

OH, YES? COME ALONG! I'VE SET UP A LABORATORY IN THE CELLAR. THIS WAY...

WHY, YOU'VE GOT A GREAT DEAL OF ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT DOWN HERE, ANDY! DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE WORKING ON MY BACK?...'

NO, PHILIP! I'VE BEEN WORKING ON THEORIES RELATING TO BRAIN SURGERY, RECENTLY. IN FACT... I'M ABOUT READY TO PERFORM MY FIRST SEVENTY-FIVE PERCENT LOMOTOMY...

ALL YOU NEED IS THE PATIENT, EH, ANDY?

DOCTOR HOBART LOOKED UP, HIS DREAMY THOUGHTS RETURNED TO THE PRESENT BY THE SHARP HAMBERING ON THE DOOR...

OH, BLAST! I FORGOT!  
IT'S THURSDAY! THEY'RE  
HERE FOR THEIR WEEKLY  
VISIT!



DOCTOR HOBART STEPPED OUT THROUGH THE SLIDING DOORS OF THE LIBRARY, TURNING TO CLOSE THEM...

I'LL BE BACK IN AS  
SOON AS THEY'VE GONE,  
PHILIP! THEN WE CAN  
CONTINUE OUR GAME!



THE LIBRARY DOORS LOCKED, ANDREW BRUMS OPENED THE FRONT DOOR...

WELL... PHILIP?  
JONORA! COME  
IN... COME IN...

WE CAN'T  
STAY LONG  
TODAY, CAN  
WE DEAR?

HUH?  
OH, YEAH...  
I HEAR...  
NO, NO! I  
WASN'T!



DOCTOR HOBART LED HIS GUESTS PAST THE LIBRARY INTO THE SITTING ROOM...

WOW! DANCING AGAIN,  
PHILIP? AREN'T YOU  
GETTING A LITTLE OLD  
FOR THAT?

HUH? MAH, WE  
ENJOY DANCING...  
DON'T WE... JONORA?  
LOSER FOR DANCING...



IT WAS A DULL, REGULARITY VISIT WITH JONORA OBVIOUSLY IMPATIENT TO GO, AND PHIL DOING LITTLE TO CARRY ON ANY CONVERSATION. THIS IS THE WAY IT'S BEEN EVERY WEEK FOR TWENTY YEARS...

WELL, WE REALLY MUST  
BE GOING? COME ALONG,  
PHILIP?

HUH? OH,  
YEAH? BYE,  
ANDY? SEE  
YOU...

OF COURSE,  
PHILIP! NEXT  
WEEK? GOOD-  
BYE...



DOCTOR HOBART LED THEM TO THE FRONT DOOR, WATCHED THEM HURRY DOWN THE WALK TO THEIR WAITING CAR...



THEN HE UNLOCKED THE DOOR AND WENT INTO THE LIBRARY...

YOU KNOW, PHILIP, I DON'T THINK JONORA NOTICED THE LEAST DIFFERENCE WHEN SHE CAME HOME FROM THAT VISIT TO HER FAMILY TWENTY YEARS AGO. SHE STILL HAS THE THINGS SHE WANTS OF HER HUSBAND, THE PHYSICAL THINGS. SHE'S PERFECTLY SATISFIED WITH YOUR BODY, AND...



... AND TWENTY-FIVE PER-  
CENT OF YOUR BRAIN, AND  
I'VE GOT THE REAL YOU,  
PHILIP... THE IMPORTANT  
PART OF YOUR BRAIN... YOUR  
CREATIVE ARTISTIC PART...



THE BRAIN FLOATED LAZILY IN THE  
JAR OF AMBER LIQUID...

AND SO THE FEARS STRETCH  
HAPPILY AHEAD OF US, PHILIP!  
YOU AND I... TOGETHER TILL  
DEATH... IN MENTAL COMPANION-  
SHIP.



DOCTOR HOBART FLIPPED ON THE  
VOICE AMPLIFIER SWITCH FOR THE  
FIRST TIME THAT EVENING... AND  
TURNED THE VOLUME...

ALL RIGHT,  
PHILIP! GO  
AHEAD! RANT  
AND RAVE!

OH, GOD? WHY  
DID YOU DO IT?  
WHY? I LOVED  
HER! I WAS HAPPY  
WITH HER! WHY DON'T  
YOU BELIEVE ME?



DOCTOR HOBART SHOOK HIS HEAD, SMILING WARMLY  
AT THE BRAIN SUSPENDED IN THE BUBBLING LIQUID...

OH, DON'T BE A FOOL, PHILIP! WHY MUST WE  
ALWAYS GO THROUGH THIS... EVERY NIGHT...  
BEFORE WE CAN SETTLE DOWN TO A NICE QUIET  
EVENING? I DID THIS FOR YOUR OWN GOOD!  
I RESCUED YOU FROM THAT NITBIT FEMALE.  
WHY, IF YOU HAD GONE ON LYING WITH HER FOR  
THE PAST TWENTY YEARS...



...YOU WOULD  
HAVE LOST  
YOUR MIND!



IT'S YOU WHO LOST YOUR  
MIND, ANOTHER! YOU? YOU'RE  
MAD! MAD! AND, OH LORD,  
LOOK WHAT YOU DID TO ME!



DOCTOR HOBART REACHED FOR THE VOICE AMPLIFIER SWITCH. THE BRAIN  
SEEMED TO TWIST SLIGHTLY AS IT FLOATED BUOYANTLY IN THE JAR.

MUST I TURN YOU OFF, PHILIP, OR WILL YOU  
BE GOOD SO WE CAN GO ON WITH OUR GAME?  
ER... I BELIEVE IT'S MY MOVE!

NO? WE STOPPED  
LAST NIGHT AFTER  
YOUR MOVE! IT'S  
MY MOVE...



HEH, HEH! WHAT WAS THAT ABOUT A  
WEDDING OF MINDS? CERTAINLY  
SOUNDS LIKE THE MAD DOCTOR  
AND HIS BOTTLED BRAIN ARE  
MARRIED. LISTEN TO THEM ARGUE  
ABOUT WHO GOES FIRST, AND  
YOU'LL KNOW ABOUT WHO GOES  
FIRST... TO JOIN THE E.G. FAR-  
ARROWS... THAT IS... WHEN YOU  
SEE THE STUFF YOU CAN GET, LIKE  
BACK ISSUES

WHEN YOU WRITE US  
FOR ORDERING  
INFO. NOW, THE  
KIDLET-KEEPER  
AGREE WITH A  
FAIRLY TO DRIVE  
ALL YOU MARRIAGE  
GAME. I'LL SEE  
YOU LATER!



# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HER, HERE AND NOW THAT G.K. HAS DRILLED YOUR BLOOD WITH HIS GRIFTY GAPE, IT'S TIME FOR ME TO FREEZE IT! YEP, IT'S YOUR HOET IN THE VAULT OF HORROR, THE VAULT-KEEPER, READY TO ENTERTAIN YOU WITH A VISIT TO AN INSANE ASYLUM. I CALL THIS MAD OLUMPTIYAH... THIS TALE OF FEAR IS TOTTA IN THE BOOBY-NATCH...

## COME BACK, LITTLE LINDA!

HE OLD MAN SAT IN THE DAMP DARKNESS OF HIS TUSTEY-PRANDUM ASYLUM CELL, SOBBING QUIETLY. HE SAT WITH WIDE STARRING EYES AND CLENCHED FISTS AMID THE FOUL ODOR OF DECAY AND PUT AND UNREMOVED HUMAN EXCREMENTS. AND HE CALLED HER NAME. SOTTO. SOTTO.

LINDA! LINDA! COME  
BACK TO ME, LINDA...



DOCTOR MORGAN ULLMAN, THE DIRECTOR OF THE COUNTY INSANE ASYLUM, MOVED SLOWLY THROUGH THE DARK OIL PASSAGEWAY LINED ON EITHER SIDE WITH ANCIENT OAKEN DUNGEON DOORS. AND THERE WAS A FAINT SMILE ON HIS HARD COLD FACE. HIS ASSISTANT, ERIC HAGEN, FOLLOWED CLOSE BEHIND.

IT WAS A STROKE OF GENIUS, ERIC, MAKING USE OF THESE OLD DUNGEON CELLS. DID I EVER TELL YOU FOR GIVING ME THE IDEA?

THE MONEY YOU PAY ME IS TWASD ENOUGH, DOCTOR ULLMAN!



DOCTOR ULLMAN STOPPED AT ONE OF THE METAL DOORS. HE SELECTED A KEY FROM THE RING HE CARRIED...

WELL, THE MONEY I PAY YOU IS THE LEAST I CAN DO, ERIC. HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN, BOY?

TWO YEARS, DOCTOR ULLMAN!

THE DOCTOR INSERTED THE KEY INTO THE LOCK AND TWISTED. THE BOLT SNAPPED OPEN. THE DOCTOR LAUGHED...

TWO YEARS, BUT IT'S BEEN TWO YEARS SINCE WE EMPTIED THE WARDEN AND HERDED ALL THE INMATES INTO THESE DUNGEON CELLS?

YES, BUT TWO YEARS!

THE DOCTOR TURNED TO ERIC, WHO TOWERED OVER HIM, TALL AND GRIN AND MUSCULAR...

DO YOU REALIZE HOW MANY SHEETS WE DIDN'T HAVE TO BUY IN TWO YEARS, ERIC? HOW MANY BLANKETTES?

QUITE A LOT, BUT...

THE DOCTOR PUSHED OPEN THE SQUEALING METAL DOOR...

DO YOU KNOW HOW MUCH WE'VE SAVED ON LAUNDRY... CLEANING... FOOD...

QUITE A LOT, SIR.

THE OLD MAN SAT IN THE DEEP DARKNESS OF HIS CELL, WHISPERING SOFTLY...

LINDA? WHERE DID YOU GO, LINDA? LINDA...?

YOU SAY HE CALLS THAT NAME CONSTANTLY...

ALMOST ALL THE TIME, SIR.

THE DOCTOR SHOOK THE OLD MAN. THE OLD MAN TURNED WITH WIDE STARRING EYES...

WHO IS LINDA, YOU OLD FOOL?

LINDA? LINDA? LINDA IS MY LOVE!

PROBABLY SOMEONE IN HIS PAST, DOCTOR!

THE DOCTOR UNRAILED THE NAUSEATING DOOR OF THE DARK CELL, AND PETCHED...

LINDA, MY LOVE! COME TO ME!

PER? CHOKE... PROBABLY? LET'S SAY... GET OUT OF HERE. HE'S BEYOND HELP!

WE'RE GOING TO CLEAN THESE CELLS OUT, DOCTOR... BEFORE AN EPIDEMIC BREAKS OUT...

THEY SLAMMED THE CELL DOOR SHUT AND MOVED BACK UP THE CORRIDOR...

PERHAPS YOU'RE RIGHT, ERIC! A DEAD INMATE MEANS WE LOSE HIS ALLOTMENT, AND WE DON'T WANT THAT TO HAPPEN, DO WE?

I'LL HAVE THE MORE RATIONAL INMATES DO THE CLEANING, DOCTOR. IT'LL SAVE HAVING TO HIRE ANYBODY...



...UP THE WHIRING STONE STEPS LEADING TO THE ASYLUM BUILDINGS ABOVE...

YOU ARE CONSCIOUS ABOUT BEING ECONOMICAL, ERIC. I'M PROUD OF YOU.

EVERY BRICK SAVED MEANS FORTY CENTS FOR ME! WHY SHOULDN'T I BE?



...AND OUT THROUGH THE DESERTED MUSTY WARDS, DOCTOR ULLMAN STOPPED AT A FILTHY WINDOW, LOOKING OUT...

IT'S TIME TO TURN ON THE LIGHTS, ERIC. WE WANT EVERYBODY DOWN THERE TO THINK THE WARDS ARE STILL OCCUPIED.

VERY WELL, DO THAT RIGHT NOW...



FAR BELOW THE BLEAK GREY INSANE ASYLUM, DOWN IN THE VALLEY, LIGHTS BLINKED ON AS TWILIGHT TURNED TO NIGHT. THE PEOPLE IN THEIR CLEAN WHITE HOUSES SAT AT CLEAN WHITE TABLES AND ATE FROM CLEAN WHITE DISHES AND NEVER DREAMED OF THE HORRORS GOING ON ABOVE THEM...



THEY NEVER HEARD THE UNMUTED SCREAMS OF THE INMATES IN THEIR SLIMY STINKING DUNGEON CELLS... NEVER FELT THE STING OF ERIC'S WHIP...



THEY NEVER TASTED THE DISH WATER SOUP... THE SPOILED BLOP MEAT... THAT WAS FED TO THE INMATES. WHAT HAPPENED, ERIC?

HE COMPLAINED, BOB. WHY DID YOU HAVE TO WHIP HIM?

HE COMPLAINED, BOB. BUT HE DIDN'T LIKE THE MEAL TONIGHT!



OH! WELL, IF HE DOESN'T LIKE WHAT WE SERVE HIM, DON'T GIVE HIM ANY FOR A WHILE. HE'LL APPRECIATE IT, AFTER... SAY... THREE DAYS!

NO! NO! I PLEASE I'LL... STARVE! I'M SORRY... BOB. I'M SORRY...





NO, THE PEOPLE IN THE CLEAN WHITE VALLEY TOWN NEVER HEARD THE SAD MOURNFUL WAILS OF THE OLD MAN... CRYING FOR HIS LOVED ONE.



YES! HE WOULDN'T HAVE ANY TROUBLE IF THEY WERE ALL AS HARMLESS AS HIM...



OH, I ALMOST FORGOT! THIS GAME FOR YOU TODAY!

END NAMED DOCTOR ULLMAN THE VERY OFFICIAL, LOOKING ENVELOPE...



WHAT IS IT, DOC? YOU'RE WHITE AS A SHEET?

IT'S FROM THE STATE BOARD OF HOSPITALS. THEY'RE ARRIVING TOMORROW FOR AN INSPECTION TOUR...

A CHILL CRAWLED UP DOCTOR ULLMAN'S SPINE, IF THE STATE BOARD DISCOVERED WHAT WAS GOING ON IN THE ASYLUM, HE AND DOC WOULD BE THROWN INTO JAIL...



THE INMATES WERE HERDED INTO THE PASSAGEWAY, AND MARCHED UP INTO THE WARDS THAT HAD LAIN DESERTED AND EMPTY FOR TWO YEARS...



THE TWO MEN SCRAMBLED DOWN THE PASSAGEWAY, UNLOCKING THE METAL BARRICADE DOORS, FLUNG THEM WIDE, SCREAMING ANGRILY AT THE COWERING INMATES WHO BLINKED AT THEM IN TERROR...



DOCTOR ULLMAN SHOWS THE HEAVY LEATHER WHIP... LASHING OUT AT THE OLD MAN...



UPSTAIRS, I SAID! UPSTAIRS!

NOT! NOT! I WANT MY LINDA! I WANT MY LINDA! I WANT MY LINDA!

ALL RIGHT LONG, IN THE WARD, THE STINKING WHIP ROSE AND FELL, UPON THE WAILING INMATES ON...



SCRUB THE WINDOWS...  
WASH DOWN THE FLOORS...  
POLISH THE BEDS...  
I WANT EVERYTHING  
SPOTLESS! WE'RE BEING  
INSPECTED TOMORROW!

ALL THE POOR ASYLUM PATIENTS SCURRIED ABOUT WITH PAILS AND ROPS AND POLISHING CLOTHS...CLEANING THE LONG-ABANDONED WARD, ALL, THAT IS, EXCEPT THE OLD MAN WHO SAT IN A CORNER SOBING SOFTLY...



LINDA? I WANT MY LINDA! WHY YOU LET HIM ALONE, ERIC?  
THEY WON'T LET ME SEE MY LINDA!

MAYBE WE OUGHT TO PUT HIM BACK DOWN THERE... IN THE DUNGEON!  
NO! WE CAN'T AFFORD IT! THEY MAY HAVE A COURT!



BUT HE COULD CAUSE TROUBLE! HIM AND HIS STUPID LINDA! MAYBE HE'LL TALK! MAYBE HE'LL TELL THEM WHERE HE'S BEEN KEPT FOR TWO YEARS!  
HE'S A BARBLING IDIOT! WHO'LL LISTEN TO THE JABBERING OF A RAVING MANIAC...



DOCTOR MILLMAN TURNED TO THE OTHER INMATES... HE BRANDISHED THE WHIP...



ONE WORD... ONE HINT FROM ANY OF YOU THAT YOU'VE BEEN MISTREATED IN THE SLIGHTEST DEGREE... AND YOU'LL REGRET IT...

THE INMATES COVERED IN FEAR AND TERROR. THERE WAS UNDERSTANDING IN THEIR EYES. EACH ONE OF THEM KNEW THAT THE DOCTOR MEANT BUSINESS. THERE WOULD BE NO SLIPS OF THE TONGUE FROM ANY OF THEM...



F-FEE, DOCTOR!  
W-WE WON'T SAY A WORD!  
NOT A WORD!  
ALL RIGHT! NOW GET BACK TO YOUR ROOMS!

ONLY THE OLD MAN, OBLIVIOUS TO EVERYTHING, CONTINUED TO SOB...



I WANT MY LINDA! I WANT MY...  
YAAAAHHHHH...  
SHUT UP, YOU OLD FOOL!  
LEAVE HIM BE, ERIC!

IN THE MORNING, THE WARDS WERE SPARKLING CLEAN, EACHES WAS MADE WITH FRESH CLEAN SHEETS AND SPOTLESS BLANKETS. THE INMATES HAD ALL BEEN BATHED AND DRESSED IN NEW UNIFORMS. EVERYTHING WAS READY FOR THE BOARD'S INSPECTION, AND THEN...



THEY NOTED THE TEMPTING DOORS DRIFTING FROM THE KITCHEN...THE GLEAMING BRASS OF THE BEDS...THE IMMACULATE CONDITION OF THE WARDS...

YOU MUST BE COMFORTABLE, DR. ULLMAN. THE ASYLUM SEEMS TO BE EXTREMELY WELL RUN. ARE THE PATIENTS HAPPY?



SUDDENLY THE WARD REVERBERATED WITH AN AMBUSHED CRY...



THEY MOVED THROUGH THE ASYLUM, SMILING, CRITICAL-MINDED, EYING EVERYTHING.



THEY WENT FROM BED TO BED...TALKING TO THE INMATES...INQUIRING...



THE OLD MAN SAT UP STARRING WILDLY...



HE CLIMBED FROM HIS BED...



THE OLD MAN SCAMPERS ACROSS THE WARD, DOWN THE CORRIDOR TO THE CELLAR DOOR...



...DOWN THE WHIRING STONE STEPS, THE BOARD FOLLOWED...



ALONG THE DIM DARK PASSAGEWAY...



THE BOARD MEMBERS PEERED INTO THE CELL, WHERE THE OLD MAN SAT COOING HAPPILY. THEY SMILED. THEY SAW THE TELL-TALE SIGNS... SMELLED THE TELL-TALE COORS.



BEHIND THEM, THE OTHER INMATES WERE COMING DOWN THE STONE STEPS, MARCHING ALONG THE PASSAGEWAY, FILING INTO THEIR RESPECTIVE DUNGEON CELLS...



THE BOARD MEMBER MOTIONED TO THE OLD MAN'S CELL, OR ULLMAN LOOKED... THEN PAID. HE WAS IN THERE ALL RIGHT... COOING AT LINDA, WHISPERING WORDS OF ENCHANTMENT TO HIS LOVE...



LINDA THE OLD MAN'S LOVE, WAS A BIG FAT UGLY FOUR-ARMED FAT

"WEE, HEE!"



# HEH, HEH! YEP! IT'S... THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

President and CEO—Stephen A. Gappi

Publisher—Russ Cochran

Dear CRYPT,

I love your comics and your tests of words. I am a witty gut-twisting fan of your comics. I love CRYPT #10, "Grounds For Horror." People should not let little kids work because it just drives them crazy. They seem to make up stories of who really did their killing.

Keep printing your stories. You have a very horror-hunger fan club out here. It's ok to print my address and zip code, I'm dying for a gut-bustin' pal.

Orlando Garcia

829 W Superior ST  
Chicago, IL 60622

May I suggest a truce?

—CK

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

Hi! It's Shawn again. I have almost all your comics. All I need is 5 more. Anyway, how are you? I wanted to ask you something, WHY is your show not on anymore? I am very disappointed.

My brother threw a party when he heard you weren't on anymore, and I got a huge poster of the HBO version of you. You're the last thing I see before I go to bed! Well, I gotta go.

Shawn Van Ellis

Philadelphia, PA

This is your late brother if promises.

—CK

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

It is in your each issue of your comic covers. Before doing on this one, #24, I realized it represented 3 1/2% of the entirety.

On page 5 of "Food for Thought", there is an invisible robe that Merta slips on. Perhaps it's the emperor's new robe? Ye know, at the turn of page 7, I figured Merta was targeted for the final twist instead of Carl.

In "Pearly to Deed", I guess Larry finally had his fill of Phil.

Bob Garfay

Camarillo, CA

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

I have two dozen comics and a toy of you.

Jeep Lovelace

Anchorage, AK



ME



YOU

I have two Ellen comics and a fan BN you! I'm a lucky dog!  
—CK

So "The Crypt-Keeper's Corner"

In issue #24: "Food for Thought" page 7 panel 7, who is Martin? It is Merta in the other 47 panels.

The caption on panel 8 page 4 of the story "Pearly to Deed" reads: "They both talked in love with her. . ." (who missed the "D" key on the typewriter?)

It's quite a coincidence that in 1954 CK used the word "Merta" in the intro to the story "Pearly Schooner", because in 1995 that word is the talk of the land.

In "Half-Sacked!" The Old Witch says that membership in the EC-FanAddict Club is limited to 250,000,000 people. That's almost the entire population of the United States, that's a lot of Addict! It's a nationwide epidemic!

David Dyllano

Warrington, CT

Let's slip you into a buried box and check YOUR resurrection, David-baby! The "Titanic" disaster was common enough in the popular mind for the first 65 years, imagine if our report of WERD SCIENCE 8 had appeared in the last six months!  
—CK

Dear CK

"Undertaking Pator", #24, seems to touch on a lot of taboo subjects for a 50c comic, death and its consequences in the form of the mortuary, murder of innocents by an unscrupulous druggist in collusion with the mortician, a sheriff's loss of a parent, and the subsequent revenge by a group of kids on the evil govt-rape defying authority in the process) and, finally, violent assault and murder in a graveyard. The kids witnessing the graveyard murder is straight out of HUCKLEBERRY FINN. Quite an intricate plot for a 'lowly' comic book!

How original (and typical) of EC to have a story narrated by a grave ("The Graving Grave")! This is one of the traits that put EC above all others in its day, and continues to 40 years hence!

EC's retelling of "The Sleeping Beauty" results, instead, reveals a tired old fairy tale with sloppy logic and a Transylvanian twist.

Barry McCollum

Alton, IL

I wondered "whatever happened to my Transylvanian Twist?"  
—CK

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

"Tales from the Crypt" #4 was great. Here's my review of it:

The cover Jack Davis does what Jack Davis does best, he impresses EC fans, and often even sells comics to fans of non-EC comics and people who watch the TV show. The ink are pathetic, though.

"Food for Thought": This story is pretty good, and is better than the TV episode, which has very, very little to do with this comic story. The next three stories are all about the ocean, or at least have something to do the ocean.

"Pearly to Dead": This is a great story with great artwork. I like how George Evans carefully drew his stories with fine line and shadow. I really like the part when Phil and Larry are clearing the way for the US Navy to blow up Japan, and I LOVE the panel where Larry sees Phil's rotted face through the porthole, because it's very creepy Great story!

"Pine's Schizophren": This is not a bad story, but I don't like Bernie Kingstain's art. It's boring and ugly. If an artist with style, like Jack Davis, Johnny Craig, Graham Ingels, George Evans or Jack Kamen illustrated this story it would have been much better.

"Half-Baked!": The creepy ocean thing is wearing off a little bit, and yet, this still manages to be the best story in the book! The ocean scenes are great. Graham Ingels is a wonderful artist.

Too bad he never drew you or The Vault-Keeper Jack Davis, usually the artist who's supposed to draw you, has drawn The Vault-Keeper and The Old Witch before; Johnny Craig, who's mostly known for drawing The Vault-Keeper, has drawn (and painted) you and The Old Witch before; but Graham Ingels, who's known for making the stupid, annoying character some people call The Old Witch worth looking at, has never drawn you or The Vault-Keeper. How sad! You and The Vault-Keeper are much better, much more original characters than The Old Witch, and I hate the title of her comic. A "Crypt of Terror" makes sense, a "Vault of Horror" makes sense, but a "Vault of Fear" doesn't. A "Vault" is not a type of creepy place.

Questions: 1) Who's version of you is the most accurate, Al Feldstein, Jack Davis, Johnny Craig, Jack Kamen, the Archaic film or Kevin Kline, who created the TV version of you? 2) Are you related to The Vault-Keeper at all, even distantly? 3) Who is the oldest Ghoul-Lord? PLEASE ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS SERIOUSLY AND HONESTLY!!

Zeke Stern

Encinitas, CA

Did you know if you play Lennon saying, "Charlie and The Deathkads" from the LET IT BE album backwards he says "Oh! Soaring past the porthole!"

We slip the entire mailorder staff in liquid Mylar twice a year, when we spray them for ticks.

If you were a habitue of The Old Witch's haunts, as I unwillingly am, you'd agree they're mighty creepy!

Only Jack Davis captured the pure physical power and ethereal grace that is me!

-CK

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

It's me, Monsterman, again. I just read your latest ish, #23, yesterday.

"Undertaking Peter" was great, up to the nice little poetic justice at the end. Still more proof that Jack Davis was the greatest of the EC artists.

"The Drowning Grief" was good, but it just felt like a remake of that one about the trunk. Besides, that thing about "earth worms" was way too necrophiliac.

Your version of "Sleeping Beauty" was funny, particularly the character of "Melen"? I look forward to see how they do it on your show.

"Shadow of a Doubt" was too good a story for that old bet, The Old Witch. Who'da think that a shadow could kill someone? That's something to try on those dog days of summer.

Monsterman

address unknown

Er, you mean "Shadow of Death", no doubt. DON'T try it during a solar eclipse! Only the late Jack Davis could do complete justice to the "Melen"? line (but that shouldn't be a problem for me, should it?).

-CK

Also, include this month are PASC and PRACY #11 each for \$24.95, TWO-PIED and VALOR next month. Don't forget HAUNT, FRONTLINE COMBAT and CRIME. Get them at your local comic book shop or SUBSCRIBE (see our ad in this issue for details).

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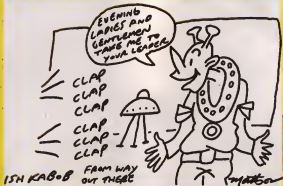
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Add \$2 per order (\$14 outside US) for S&H

Write to:  
CRYPT  
GEMSTONE  
POB 446  
WEST PLAINS MO 65775

THIS COMIC REPRINTS  
TALES FROM THE CRYPT #41\* (#38, APR/MAY 84)  
COVER by Jack Davis  
"Operation Friendship" Jack Davis  
"Come Back, Little Uncle" George Evans  
"Current Attraction" Jack Kamen  
"Mass Call" Graham Ingels

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When the PLUTONIAN COLLEGE OF PLUTONIC KNOWLEDGE show ended with the retirement of handbeater Cy Caelum, his entourage dispersed to the eight corners of the solar system to start solo careers. Our luck, we got told! It does explain much about the career of Jerry Lewis, however. Showbiz told from Frank Tractors the People's Mattson, Spring City, PA, to start THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S PAGE OF...

## FINE ARTS 1982



Here's a switch: I go into the crypt to tell them, Brian Shoo, Waltham, MA comes out of the grave to read them. Is there any way to cut out the middleman (you can use my quest)? -CK

Send your contri-bu-tions (not returnable, not too long, not too big, legible, double-spaced text &/or bold black art. Warning...we edit to:

## THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S PAGE OF FINE ARTS

Morpheus's War, Morpheo Brown, Morpheo Red, Mrs. Morpheo's Chawder, all read how to...

### Morpheus's Law

Mood like the weather, sultry, searing.  
Spies rumored vampire, strobe on, peering.  
Scant of a victim, waiting fine  
Beacons this Dark One, keen to dine.

"Some say you're evil," comes her greeting.  
"People will say things," her eyes meeting.  
Foundering in eyes hypnotic,  
She fails to charm more than hypnotic.

Durbs his canines, glinting, keen.  
Saps from her juglar, least unseen  
Vamp-eyes like onyx, grasping, glowing  
Blood of the victim, sipping, howling.

Touch of the vampire, rise unholy;  
A kiss for the living who's  
Death to the maiden, now undead.  
Bridge of a monster with earthy bed

Shudd'ring transition, metamorphic,  
Reasur-rection, grave-euphoric  
"Well come," he says, "to my Necrology"  
But she proves to be a prodigy.

She grabs his cloak, gives him a smack,  
Bites his neck and bites him back.

As I recover from surgery, here's a candidate for the Fine Arts Page (Please print address.

R/C, Garby, 3/27/88

3183 Sunny LN  
Camarillo, CA 93012

I CALL THIS ELECTRIFYING YARN...

# CURRENT ATTRACTION



AGE HAS CREEPT UP ON OLD RUPE AND STIFFENED HIS JOINTS AND SLACKENED HIS MUSCLES AND FINALLY HE'S BEEN FORCED TO CLIMB DOWN FROM THE FLYING TRAPEZES WHERE FOR ALMOST A QUARTER OF A CENTURY HE'D REIGNED AS KING. NO MORE WOULD THE BAND PLAY AND THE DRUMS ROLL AND THE AUDIENCE SAP AS THE SPOTLIGHT FOLLOWED HIM ACROSS THE BIG TOP IN HIS DEATH-DEFYING AERIAL ACT. HE WAS A *HAS-BEEN*... A *FORGOTTEN NAME*... A *FADED STAR*. HIS PERFORMING DAYS WERE OVER. BUT THE CIRCUS WAS IN OLD RUPE'S BLOOD. IT WAS HIS LIFE. AND SO HE'D STAYED ON... ENTERING THE ANIMALS, HELPING THE RINGMASTERS, DOING ANY ODD-JOB AVAILABLE... JUST SO HE COULD BE NEAR THE TRAMPER AND THE TAMARU AND THE CANYON WORLD HE LOVES. AND THEN THERE WAS JEAN... RUPE'S DAUGHTER. THERE WAS JEAN'S *FUTURE* TO CONSIDER...



MOM, DADDY... *NO! NO! NO! YET!* YOU HAVEN'T GOT ENOUGH HEIGHT! PUMP! SET UP THERE... HIGHER...

JEAN HAD BEEN TEN WHEN HER MOTHER HAD MISTIMED HER DOUBLE FORWARD SUMMERSWALT AND CAME CRASHING DOWN TO THE BIG TOP FLOOR... LEAVING JEAN AN ORPHAN AND RUPE A WIDOWER. THAT HAD BEEN EIGHT YEARS AGO...



THAT'S IT, HONEY! THAT'S IT! REMEMBER! TUCK! TUCK! TIGHT WHEN YOU SPIN... HERE... SOUL...

OLD RUPE FINGERED THE NET-POLE NERVOUSLY AS IF HE WERE AFRAID IT MIGHT SUDDENLY VANISH, LEAVING HIS PRECIOUS DAUGHTER SWINGING ALONE UP THERE WITHOUT ITS LIFE-PRESERVING PROTECTION...



NO! NO! TOO SOON! EEEEEEE...



FOR A MOMENT OLD RUPE'S HEART STOPPED BEATING AS HE WATCHED HIS LOVELY DAUGHTER'S BODY FLAIL, THEN PLUMBED DOWNWARD. IT WAS AN OLD MEMORY, ONE THAT HE WOULD NEVER FORGET.

IT'S...IT'S ALL RIGHT, HONEY! RELAX! RELAX WHEN YOU HIT!

JEAN SOBBERED AS SHE CLIMBED DOWN FROM THE NET AND REACHED FOR THE CAPE HER FATHER HUNG OUT FOR HER...

I'LL...I'LL NEVER BE ANY GOOD, DADDY! NEVER! DON'T! WHY DON'T WE EYE UP?

YOU'LL DO IT, HONEY! YOU'LL SEE! YOU'LL BE A STAR SOME DAY!



THEY WALKED IN SILENCE ACROSS THE TANNAPARK FLOOR, DOWN BETWEEN THE SEATS, AND OUT INTO THE SUN-LIGHT...

A TALL, HANDSOME, DARK-EYED MAN CAME STRIDING ACROSS THE BROADWAY, GRINNING BROADLY...

BO! I SEE YOU HAVE BEEN PRACTISING, LOVELY ONE! THAT IS GOOD!

I'LL NEVER BE ANY GOOD, ENRICO!

YOU'LL BE SOME SOME-DAY!

DON'T TALK THAT WAY! WHY, WHEN YOUR MOTHER AND HE STARTED...

OH, ENRICO! THIS IS MY DADDY! EVERYBODY CALL HIM 'RUPE'!

A PLEASURE TO MEET THE FATHER OF SUCH A CHARMING GIRL, MR. EN... RUPE!



RUPE STUDIED THE GRAY-LOOKING STRANGER.

YOU'RE NEW AROUND HERE, AREN'T YOU? WHAT'S YOUR ACT?

ENRICO IS A STAR, DADDY! HE USUALLY GETS TOP BILLING! HE JUST JOINED OUR CIRCUS YESTERDAY! HE'S A KNIFE-THROWER!

I ALSO THROW THE MACHETE AND THE CLEAVER.



ENRICO TURNED TO JEAN.

I WILL SEE YOU LATER, THEN... AS WE PLANNED. NO REVISIT.

ALL RIGHT, ENRICO! SEE, FOR NOW!

WHEW!



OLD RUFE AND HIS DAUGHTER  
WALKED ON IN SILENCE UNTIL THEY  
CAME TO THEIR TRAILER, THEN...

I DON'T LIKE  
HIM! HE'S A  
BREAD-LOOKIN'  
CHARACTER!

HE'S VERY  
SWEET, DADDY...  
AND VERY  
MUNDANE-  
STOOD! HIS  
WIFE...

OLD RUFE SPUN AROUND...

HIS WIFE IF HE'S  
MARRIED?

OH, YES! HIS  
WIFE IS HIS  
PARTNER IN  
THE ACT! SHE  
STANDS UP  
AGAINST A  
BOARD AND  
HE...

I'LL NOT HAVE  
MY DAUGHTER  
GOING OUT  
WITH A MARRI-  
ED MAN!

DON'T BE SILLY,  
DADDY! WE'RE  
JUST FRIENDS!  
NOTHING MORE!  
HE'S VERY UN-  
HAPPY!

THAT NIGHT, RUFE CAUGHT ENRICO'S ACT. IT WAS QUITE SENSATIONAL! HIS WIFE WOULD STAND SPREAD-EAILED BEFORE A BOARD AND HE'D COOLLY KISS HER WITH KNIVES, THROWING THEM IN RAPID SUCCESSION, ENDING UP WITH A CLEAVER BLAMING INTO THE WOOD BEHIND HER HEAD...

BRAVO!

GREAT! TERRIFIC!

GOOD!

ISN'T HE

I'D HATE TO

WE HIS WIFE

AND HAVE

HIM SORE

AT MY ONE

SLIP...



THAT'S JUST IT, DADDY!  
THEY DON'T GET ALONG!  
HE'S NOT IN LOVE  
WITH HER ANY LONGER.  
BUT SHE REFUSES TO  
GIVE HIM A DIVORCE!

AND YOU MEAN  
TO TELL ME  
SHE LETS HIM  
STAND THERE  
AND THROW  
KNIVES AT  
HER?



ISN'T SHE HORRIBLE?  
ENRICO IS A MURDEROUS  
WRECK! HE DOESN'T WANT  
TO HARM A HAIR ON HER  
HEAD, THAT MAKES IT ALL  
THE MORE DIFFICULT  
FOR HIM!

HOW COME YOU'RE  
SO INTERESTED IN  
HIS PRIVATE LIFE?



I... I THINK I'M IN  
LOVE WITH ENRICO,  
DADDY!

WHAT? IN LOVE WITH HIM? DON'T  
BE A FOOL, JEAN! YOU'RE TOO  
YOUNG! WHAT ABOUT YOUR CAREER?  
IN ANOTHER FEW MONTHS, YOUR ACT  
WILL BE BE FINE AND YOU'LL BE ON YOUR  
WAY! LOVE ISN'T FOR YOU! NOT  
NOW!



JEAN SHOOK HER HEAD...

I'M SORRY, DADDY! I CAN'T JUST TURN MY HEART OFF LIKE A RADIO! WHEN IT HAPPENS, IT HAPPENS! AND YOU CAN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT!

YOU CAN AVOID LETTING IT HAPPEN! YOU DON'T HAVE TO LOOK FOR IT!



JEAN SMILED AT HER FATHER AND STARTED OFF ACROSS THE CIRCUS GROUNDS...

IT'S TOO LATE, DADDY! IT'S ALREADY HAPPENED!

JEAN! COME BACK! JEAN!



HE COULD SEE THEM IN THE MOON-LIGHT... MEETING AND WALKING OFF... ARM IN ARM... HIS DAUGHTER, AND ENRICO...

NO, JEAN! NO! I WON'T LET YOU RUN YOUR LIFE! I'VE WORRIED TOO LONG AND TOO HARD WITH YOU TO LET YOU THROW IT AWAY!



THAT NIGHT, OLD RUFUS TRIED TO WAIT UP FOR HIS DAUGHTER TO COME HOME. HE REMEMBERED THE CLOCK HANDS POINTING TO THREE BEFORE HE DOZED OFF. AND WHEN HE AWOKE, IT WAS MORNING, AND JEAN WAS SLEEPING SOUNDLY...

THIS CANNOT GO ON! IT'S INSANE! I'M GOT TO TALK TO HIM...



RUFUS DRESSED ABRUSLY AND HURRIED ACROSS THE CIRCUS GROUNDS TO THE TRAILER MARKED 'THE GREAT ENRICO'. HE HAMMERED ON THE DOOR.

JEAN? WHAT DO YOU WANT?

YOUR... YOUR MARRIAGE... I WANT TO SEE HIM... ALONE!



ENRICO'S WIFE WAS A TIRED-EYES BLEACHED GLOUGE WHO REEKED OF LIQUOR. SHE STEPPED OUT OF THE TRAILER AND SMILED...

SURE, OLD MAN! ONLY YOU'LL HAVE TO WAKE HIM UP. HE WAS OUT ALL NIGHT LAST NIGHT. HE'S STILL ASLEEP.

TH-THANK YOU!



OLD RUFUS LEANED OVER THE SLEEPING ENRICO AND SHOOK HIM ROUGHLY...

HUH? WHO... WHAT... YAWN... WHAT DO YOU WANT?

I WANT TO TALK TO YOU! ABOUT MY DAUGHTER! I WANT YOU TO LEAVE HER ALONE!



THE GREAT ENRICO STRODE ABOUT THE TRAILER IN A FLAKY LOUNGING ROBE, PUFFING ON A LONG CHARETTE HOLDER, LISTENING TO OLD RUPE PLEAD WITH HIM...

SHE IS YOURS... JENNY PERISHED. SHE HAS HER WHOLE LIFE AHEAD OF HER. I SEE OF YOU...



I AM SORRY, BEHON! I CANNOT WAKE UP YOUR DAUGHTER!

ENRICO SMILED...

I FIND HER TOO ATTRACTIVE?

I... I'M WARNING YOU, ENRICO!



DO NOT THREATEN ME, ALL RIGHT OLD MAN. IF YOUR DAUGHTER ASKED AND I CANNOT FALL IN LOVE WITH YOUR BLESSINGS... THEN IT SHALL BE WITHOUT THEM! GOOD DAY!

YOU IN A MIST? NOW ... LOOK OUT!



OLD RUPE LEFT ENRICO'S TRAILER AND STAMPEDED ACROSS THE CIRCUS GROUNDS, PUMPH... HE CAME INTO THE BIG TOP, HIS MIND WHIRLING...

I CAN'T LET HIM BRACK MY JEANNIE'S LIFE! I'VE GOT TO GET RID OF HIM! I'VE...



THE BOARD THAT THE GREAT ENRICO USED IN HIS ACT STOOD IN ITS POSITION IN THE CENTER RING, READY FOR THE NIGHT'S PERFORMANCE. OLD RUPE STUDIED ITS FITTED AND SCARRED SURFACE...

HMPH! YOU CAN ALMOST OUTLINE THE SILHOUETTE OF ENRICO'S WIFE FROM ALL THESE SCAR MARKS! AND THE CLEANER MARK IS... IS...



ENRICO'S VOICE RANG IN OLD RUPE'S EAR...

I FIND HER... TOO ATTRACTIVE?

OF COURSE! THAT'S IT! ATTRACTION! THAT'S IT!



OLD RUPE LET HIMSELF INTO THE ELECTRICIAN'S SHED WITHOUT BEING SEEN. HE DRUCKLED SOFTLY TO HIMSELF...

EVERYONE KNOWS ENRICO NO LONGER LOVES HIS WIFE. EVERYONE KNOWS SHE WON'T GIVE HIM A DIVORCE. SO... WHAT BETTER WAY TO GET RID OF HER...



RUFUS CARRIED THE COIL OF FIRE COPPER WIRE AND THE BAR OF SOFT IRON BACK TO THE BIG-TOP.

TOMORROW...TOMORROW ENRICO THROWS THE CLEAVER DIRECTLY AT HIS WIFE'S HEAD... SPLITTING IT OPEN... KILLING HER. IT WILL BE SO OBVIOUS! HE WILL BE CHARGED WITH MURDER! ALL THE EVIDENCE WILL POINT TO IT! EVEN JEAN WILL HAVE TO TESTIFY AGAINST HIM!



...AND SLOWLY, PAINFULLY, RUFUS WOUND THE COPPER WIRE AROUND THE IRON CORE, CREATING A POWERFUL ELECTRO-MAGNET. THEN HE SECURED THE MAGNET TO THE REAR OF THE TARGET BOARD, EXACTLY BEHIND WHERE ENRICO'S WIFE'S HEAD ALWAYS RESTED.

THERE! NOW...TO ATTACH THE WIRES TO A STRONG CURRENT...AND WE'RE SET! WHEN HE THROWS THAT CLEAVER...



THAT'S RIGHT, THE SHOW BEGAN AS USUAL. OLD RUFUS STOOD BY, WAITING FOR ENRICO'S ACT TO BEGIN...

HE GOES ON IN THIRTY SECONDS!

HEY, RUFUS! I GOT A JOB FOR YOU! C'MON!

ME...



THE HOUTABOUT FOREMAN LED RUFUS OUT OF THE BIG TOP BEHIND. THE DRUMS ROLLED...THE SYMBOLS CLASHED...

THAT'S...THAT'S ENRICO'S ACT STARTING! I WANTED TO SEE IT! I...

YOU'LL SEE IT TOMORROW! THIS IS MORE IMPORTANT! I OWE THIS SOMEBODY A FAVOR!



RUFUS FOLLOWED THE FOREMAN ACROSS THE CIRCUS GROUNDS. A FIGURE STOOD IN THE MOONLIGHT, WAITING...

HELP THIS GAL CARRY HER BAGS DOWN TO THE STATION, EN, RUFUS!

I-FOU!

YES! NO! I'M LEAVING HIM! YOUR DAUGHTER CONVINCED ME!



RUFUS'S BLOOD FROZE! THE DRUMS WERE BUILDING UP TO A CRESCENDO NOW. THE END OF THE GREAT ENRICO'S ACT WAS AT HAND. RUFUS COULD SEE THE CLEAVER RAISED...SEE IT FLYING THROUGH THE AIR...SEE IT WAVER AS IT ENTERED THE MAGNETIC FIELD...SEE IT SWERVE INWARD...CUTTING...SPLITTING...THE BLOOD...THE RED RAW FLESH AND BONE...THE BRAINS...

CHUCK...AND

SHE? JEAN? MY DAUGHTER?

SHE'S TAKING MY PLACE IN THE ACT, YOU! C'MON! LET'S GO!



HEY, HEH! SO IF ANYBODY'S INTERESTED IN A SLIGHTLY USED, BROOD-MAID KNIFE-THROWER'S BOARD, IT'S AVAILABLE. ONLY THIS IS, IT'S A BIT STAINED! OF COURSE, AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, IT OUGHT TO BE USED THAT WAY! SORT OF JOSS SOMETHING, DON'T YOU THINK? AND NOW, IT'S TIME

TO TURN YOU OVER TO THE OLD WITON, WHO WILL BRING UP MY BORNED MAN FOR THIS ISSUE. OH! REMEMBER THE E.G. FAN ABOUT CLIM? DON'T DO NOTHING! JUST REMEMBER IT!

BYE!



BEHIND THEM CRASHES CRASHED, AND A BASS DRUM BOOMED THE GRAND FINALE!

# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! WELL, DON'T JUST STAND THERE WITH YOUR TONGUES HANGING OUT! COME IN! COME INTO THE HAUNT OF FEAR! I'VE GOT ANOTHER SLIME-SERVING BREWING IN MY CAULDRON, ALL READY TO DISH OUT. YEP! IT'S ME, AGAIN... THE OLD WITCH! HEE, HEE! HUNGRY FOR HORROR, ARE YOU? GOOD! THEN CLOSE YOUR DILATED NOSTRILS AND OPEN YOUR LITTLE LICKING MOUTHS AND I'LL SPOIL IN YOUR FACE... THIS IS HANG GROOMER'S HEERING RECIPE... VINTAGE 1981. LISTEN, NOW, TO THE TASTY TALE OF TERROR HAND DALLS...

## MESS CALL

WAGNET

Ahhh! IT IS WARM AND DRY HERE... IT IS GOOD TO FEEL WARM AND DRY. I AM SO TIRED... SO VERY TIRED... AND MY EYES ARE HEAVY WITH SLEEP. I CLOSE THEM I SLEEP...

COME, CORPORAL! WAKE UP! ON YOUR FEET! I HAVE FOR YOU AN IMPORTANT ASSIGNMENT! COME AT ONCE!



I AM GOING OUT THERE AGAIN. I DO NOT LIKE IT OUT THERE. IT IS WET AND COLD OUT THERE. HERE IT IS WARM AND DRY...

...YOU WILL PROCEED TO AREA H IN 10 YOU WILL DATE YOUR REPORT NOW! ELABORATE... AND THE EXACT HOUR THAT IS IMPORTANT?

YES, OVERLORD!



I AM CRAWLING ON MY BELLY THROUGH THE MUD. IT IS COLD AND DAMP AND I SHIVER AND MY TEETH CHATTER. I BRIP MY GUNNER TIGHTER. I AM APPROACHING AREA 14 NOW. I MUST BE QUIET. *THEY ARE THERE... THE ENEMY...*



THEY ARE JUST OVER THAT HILL AHEAD. I WILL HIDE IN THIS SHELL-HOLE. I MUST BE QUIET...



*'NOW IS, BUT, 10:40 P.M. ENEMY POSITION 14 FOR MEET UP.'* I STOP WRITING MY REPORT. I LISTEN. SOMEONE IS HERE... HERE IN THIS SHELL-HOLE... WITH ME...

HE COMES AT ME... AN ENEMY SOLDIER. I BRING MY GUNNER AROUND, BENDING MY BARREL UP HIS SOFT BELLY... PLUNGING IT UPWARD... FEELING THE CRUNCH-ING BONE... HEARING THE SUCKING SOUNDS...

I AM FRIGHTENED. HIS ARMS SWING OUTWARD. I PULL MY BARREL AND THRUST AGAIN... STABBING. SLASHING. CUTTING HIM TO PIECES. I SEE HIS FACE... HIS EYES... AND THE BLOOD POURING... AND I AM SICK...



HE... HE IS DEAD? AND NOW MY ORIELLENTANT IS CALLING ME. CALLING ME BACK. EVERYTHING IS FADING. NO? IT IS NOT MY ORIELLENTANT CALLING ME. IT IS THE DOCTOR'S VOICE. I AM BACK WHERE IT IS WARM AND DRY.



THE DOCTOR IS TALKING TO THAT MAN ABOUT ME...

SO... YOU HAVE BEEN FOR YOURSELF HERE HENRIKON. IT IS ALWAYS THE SAME VIOLENT NIGHTMARE? HE DREAMS VIVIDLY, EACH NIGHT OF THAT EXPERIENCE IN THE FRENCHES? IT HAUNTS HIM? HOWEVER, HE IS PERFECTLY STRONG AND HEALTHY IN EVERY OTHER RESPECT. SO YOU NEED NOT HAVE ANY FEARS...



I WAS ASLEEP, BUT I AM AWAKE NOW. IT IS MORNING AND THE DOCTOR IS TALKING TO HERR HEINRICH...



...AND SO I HAVE ARRANGED EVERYTHING! YOU MAY TAKE HIM TODAY! I NEED NOT TELL YOU HOW *WASTEFUL* WE ARE!

ACH! I AM GLAD TO DO THIS FOR HIM, HERR DOCTOR!

HANS! I HAVE NEWS! YOU ARE LEAVING HERE TODAY, MY BOY! HERR HEINRICH IS TAKING YOU TO HIS HOME...TO LIVE! YOU WILL HELP IN HIS SHOP, OF COURSE, BUT THE WORK WILL BE LIGHT, AND THE HOURS SHORT! WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THIS, HANS?



THIS IS VERY GOOD OF YOU, HERR HEINRICH!

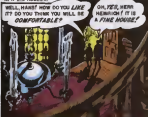
ACH! IT IS NOTHING, HANS!

WE ARE RIDING IN A CARRIAGE. IT IS GOOD TO BE OUT OF THE HOSPITAL... HERR HEINRICH IS A KIND MAN...

YES, *MEAT* IS VERY *SCARCER*, HANS! BUT I HAVE SAVED CAREFULLY AND SELL ONLY TO MY OWN CUSTOMERS AND FRIENDS! BUT *ENOUGH* OF BUSINESS... LOOK! THERE IS MY ADDRESS...YOUR NEW HOME...



HERR HEINRICH'S HOUSE IS BIG. IT IS VERY NICE TO LIVE IN A BIG HOUSE...



WELL, HANS! HOW DO YOU LIKE IT? DO YOU THINK YOU WILL BE COMFORTABLE?

OH, YES, HERR HEINRICH! IT IS A FINE HOUSE!

THIS FOOD IS GOOD. I LIKE ESPECIALLY THE PICKLED MEATS... AND THE WINE...



TO YOUR GOOD HEALTH, HANS! HERE! MORE WINE, MY BOY! IT IS GOOD FOR YOU!

IT IS WONDERFUL WINE...AND DELICIOUS FOOD, TOO!

MY ROOM...IT HAS NICE THINGS. THE BED IS VERY SOFT, AND I AM TIRED...



SLEEP WELL, HANS! AND REMEMBER! TOMORROW, WE GO TO MY BUTCHER SHOP! GOOD-NIGHT!

GOOD-NIGHT, HERR HEINRICH! I WILL WORK HARD FOR YOU!

AHHH! IT IS WARM HERE... WARM AND DRY. I LIE ON MY NEW SOFT BED...AND I COZE...



COME, COMFORT! MAKE UP! ON YOUR FEET!



I AM STABBING... SLASHING... CUTTING HIM TO RIBBONS. I SEE THE BLOOD POURING, AND I AM SORE. HE IS DEAD. AND NOW, MY OVERLEUTNANT IS CALLING... CALLING ME BACK. NO! IT IS NOT MY OVERLEUTNANT. IT IS...



THE AIR IS COOL, BUT I AM WARM. WE ARE WALKING TO HERR HEINRICH'S SHOP. I FEEL GOOD...



HERR LUDMEYER HAS COME. WE ARE DRINKING AND EATING SOOO PICKLED MEATS. AND I GROW TIRED.

I GO TO MY ROOM AND UNDRESS AND LIE ON MY SOFT BED... SOFT AND WARM AND DRY.

HE COMES AT ME AND I SMILE AROUND, HIDING MY SWORD INTO HIS SOFT BELLY... CUTTING, STABBING, SLASHING HIM TO RIBBONS... THE BLOOD POURING, POURING...



I AM SWEETING THE SHOP. I DO THIS EVERY MORNING. AND I HELP HERR HERRICH LIFT THE HEAVY THINGS. I AM STRONG.



WANT? COME GIVE ME A HAND, LIKE A GOOD FELLOW?

YES, HERR HERRICH.

THERE! THAT IS GOOD! HA! HA! NO ONE IN ALL BERLIN HAS AS MUCH MEAT AS I! ANOTHER CUSTOMER IS HERE!



HERR HERRICH IS FRIENDLY. HE IS AGAIN INVITING SOMEONE TO HIS HOUSE.



YES, SUSTAN. WE NEED FINE! RELAX A TOWN! YOU... YOU HERRICH! AND YOUR WIFE! COME FINE! I TO MY HOUSE TONIGHT. BRING MY WE WILL HAVE SCHNAPPS! WHAT DO YOU SAY?

WIFE! TELL ME! WHERE DO YOU LIVE?

AGAIN I AM DRINKING AND EATING WITH HERR HERRICH'S FRIENDS. MANY TIMES I DO THIS... TONIGHT, I DON'T FEEL GOOD. DRINKING... TOO MUCH...



OH, FRAU SHOTS. YOU HAVE TASTED NOTHING UNTIL YOU HAVE TRIED THE IMPORTED FINE'S IN MY WINE CELLAR. COME, SUSTAN... FRAU SHOTS? I WILL SHOW YOU!

YOU ARE A GENEROUS HOST, HERR HERRICH!

I... I AM VERY SLEEPY! I WILL GO TO BED, NOW! GOODNIGHT.

I AM IN MY ROOM! IT IS DARK HERE! I AM DIZZY! EVERYTHING IS SPINNING AND I AM FALLING... FALLING...



CRACK

M... MY HEAD! IT HURTS! IT... IT IS WARM AND DRY HERE! IT IS GOOD TO FEEL WARM AND DRY. I AM SO TIRED, AND



COME, CORPORAL! WAKE UP! ON YOUR FEET! I HAVE FOR YOU AN IMPORTANT ASSIGNMENT.





HURRY, CORPORAL! THERE IS MUCH TO DO TONIGHT! COME! COME!

YES, OVERLEUTENANT!

IT IS COLD AND DAMP AND I SHIVER AND MY TEETH CHATTER...

THIS WAY, CORPORAL! THIS WAY... BUT BE CAREFUL! THE ENEMY IS JUST OVER THAT HILL...



I MUST BE QUIET. I WILL HIDE IN THE SHELL HOLE AND MAKE OUT MY REPORT...

NOVEMBER 21, 1917  
10:40 P.M. ENEMY POSITION: 80 YARDS WEST OF...

LISTEN, HANST! LISTEN! TAKE THIS! YOUR MAUSER...



SOMEONE IS IN THIS SHELL HOLE WITH ME. I TURN, GRIPPING MY MAUSER...



THERE HE IS, HANST! GET HIM! GET HIM!

AN ENEMY SOLDIER... I SWING AROUND, SENDING MY BAYONET INTO HIS SOFT BELLY... FEELING THE CRUMMING BONE... HEARING THE DUCKING SOUND...



GOOD, HANST! GOOD! NOW, GO TO WORK!

I PULL OUT MY BAYONET AND THRUST AGAIN, STANDING, GLASHING, CUTTING HIM TO RIBBONS...



CAREFUL, HANST! CAREFUL!

I SEE HIS FACE... HIS EYES... AND THE BLOOD POURING... POURING... AND I AM SO...



HANST! WHY DO YOU STOP? FINISH! FINISH YOUR WORK!

MY HEAD HURTS WHERE I STRUCK IT AND MY DREAM VANISHES, AND I AM STANDING IN A DARK CAMP CELLAR BEFORE A...A...



OH, LORD! A BUTCHER'S CHOPPING BLOCK!

NO OH HANG! FEMUR!

GHORE! THERE... THERE IS A BODY ON THE BLOCK! IT IS... HEAR SHOTS! AND THIS IS NO BAYONET! THIS IS A CLEAVER IN MY HAND!



GHORP! I ORDER YOU! FURNISH YOUR ASSIGNMENT!

I...I HAVE DONE A HORRIBLE TERRIBLE THING! BUT... BUT HOW MANY OTHER TIMES HAVE I DONE THIS? HOW MANY OTHER TIMES HAS HE...HE...? OOOOH...MY HEAD! MY MEMORY! IT'S COMING BACK!



HANG! GOT TO UPSTAIRS!

I REMEMBER NOW! YES! YES! I WAS A BUTCHER... A GOOD BUTCHER! THEN A SOLDIER! I WAS A SOLDIER AND I KILLED A MAN IN A SHELL HOLE! THERE WAS AN EXPLOSION! EVERY NIGHT I HAVE DREAMED OF THAT KILLING! Y...YOU! YOU MADE ME DO THIS FRENCH WORK WHILE I DREAMED!



YES!...YES! YOU FOUND OUT I WAS A BUTCHER! LIKE NO OTHER SHOP IN ALL GERMANY, YOURS IS FULL OF MEAT! ALL OF THE VISITORS YOU HAVE BROUGHT DOWN HERE? YES! OF COURSE! YOUR EXCLUSIVE SHOP IS FILLED WITH HUMAN MEAT!!



N...NO! NO!

HE COMES AT ME...AND EVERYTHING GOES BLACK. IT IS SUDDENLY COLD AND DAMP AND HE IS THE ENEMY SOLDIER AND I AM STABBING MY BAYONET INTO HIS SOFT BELLY...CRUNCHING THE BONE...HEARING THE SUCCOR SOUNDS...STABBING...SLASHING...CUTTING HIM TO RIBBONS...HIS FACE...HIS EYES...THE BLOOD FOUNTAINS...POURING...



GOOD LORD!

GHORE...

HIE, HIE! WELL, I REMEMBER THAT'S MY DELIRIUM DISH FOR THIS ISSUE OF G.I.'S WAR. POOR HANG! THAT BLOW ON THE NOSE IN CLEARED IT FOR A FEW MINUTES... BUT HE SOON SLIPPED BACK INTO THE OLD GRIND! ANYWAY, HE WAS PUT INTO A HUGE WARM DRY ROOM WITH CUSHIONED WALLS AND BARRED WINDOWS AND HE NEVER ATE ANOTHER HAMBURGER AS LONG AS HE LIVED! 'WELL, NOW WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN Y. A. 'S WAR, THE VALLEY OF HORROR!





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NO. 42  
JULY



10¢

# TALES FROM THE CRYPT

FEATURING...



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER





# THE NEWSDEALERS OF AMERICA ARE SCREAMING...

# STOPPIT!



**BECAUSE, WITH JUST ONE DAY'S DISPLAY...**

**POOF!**  
**THERE GOES PANIC!**

SO IF YOU'RE SELF CONSCIOUS IN A  
B.O. (BYING OUT) CROWD...IF PANIC  
GOES FOOT/ TOO QUICKLY WHERE YOU  
BROWSE... IF YOU'D RATHER NOT  
PERSPIRE TILL THE NEXT ISSUE COMES  
IN... THEN SUBSCRIBE / FILL OUT THE  
COUPON, ENCLOSE ONE DOLLAR FOR  
EIGHT (8) ISSUES, AND MAIL / JUST  
GIVE THE ENVELOPE A GENTLE SQUEEZE  
AND POOF!... SAY GOODBYE TO ORDER  
PROBLEMS! THE ONLY THING YOU'LL  
HAVE LEFT TO WORRY ABOUT THEN  
IS AN OVERSIZING MAILMAN!

THE PANICK EDITIONS OF PANIC  
ROOM 104  
225 LAFAYETTE STREET  
N. Y. C. 10012 N. Y.

I ENCLOSE ONE DOLLAR (\$1.00), PLEASE  
RUSH ME THE NEXT EIGHT DISCOUNTED  
ISSUES OF AMVIC. I WANT TO SAY "POOF"  
TO MY FRIENDS!

**Figure 6**

### Abstract

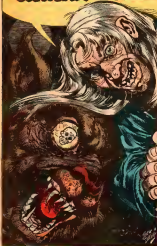
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# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

GREETINGS, BOYS AND GNOMES! WELCOME ONCE AGAIN TO THE MAGAZINE VOTED "I'D MOST LIKE TO BE SHIPWRECKED ON A DESERT ISLAND WITH, IF MARILYN MONROE WERE ALONE TOO!" (GIGGLE) THERE MUST BE AN HORROR IN THAT SOMEWHERE. ANYWAY, IT'S YOUR CRYPT-KEEPER MAN, WELCOMING YOU TO ANOTHER SLIMY SESSION OF SICKENING SELECTIONS STARTING WITH THIS SCREAM-STORY GUARANTEED TO DRIVE YOU NOTED! IT'S A MASTERPIECE OF MUSICAL HORRORITE... A FAVORITE OF MINE! I CALL THIS DISGUSTING BELLYING INTO DELIRIUM...

## CONCERTO for VIOLIN and WEREWOLF



SACHA BARIAN, THE FAMED CONCERT VIOLINIST, CLUTCHED HIS PRECIOUS STRADIVARIUS PROTECTIVELY TO HIS BREAST AND CURSED SOFTLY TO HIMSELF AS THE OLD COACH RUMBLE AND BUMPED OVER THE BUTTED ROAD THROUGH THE ROMANIAN COUNTRYSIDE. THE OLD COACH HAD BEEN THE ONLY MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION AVAILABLE TO SACHA. TAXI DRIVERS HAD LOOKED AT HIS WIDE-EYED AND TURNED AWAY WHEN HE TOLD THEM HIS DESTINATION. SO HE'D CLIMBED INTO THE ANCIENT VEHICLE, WITH ITS TIGHT-LIPPED DRIVER, AND NOW HE WAS BEING WHIPPED AND JOSTLED ABOUT AS IT THUNDERED INTO THE NIGHT...



BLAST! THESE CONFUSED TRANSYLVANIAN HORRORS ARE EVEN WORSE THAN I REMEMBER THEM. IF IT WEREN'T TO SEE KASIE & KOREA, I WOULD NEVER EVER ATTEMPT SUCH A JOURNEY!

THE FOAM-FLOUGHED HORSE CHARGED INTO THE OMBROUS BLACK HILLS WITHOUT SLACKENING ITS MAD PACE. SACHA LEANED FROM THE COACH WINDOW AND SHOUTED AT THE DRIVER, WHO REMAINED AS HE HAD BEEN FROM THE START OF THE TRIP, GULLED AND MUTE.

"SLOW DOWN, YOU FOOL! DO YOU WANT TO GET US BOTH KILLED?"



SO THE FAMED VIOLINIST COULD ONLY PRAY FOR SAFE DELIVERANCE TO HIS DESTINATION, SOON, THE CREAKING BROOMING COACH CLATTERED LOUDLY OVER COBBLESTONES. THEY WERE PASSING THROUGH A TOWN THAT SACHA RECOGNIZED.

"OH, SAKA! 'THANK HEAVENS' ONLY SEVEN MORE MILES TO BRUDJA!"



THE LAST SEVEN MILES BETWEEN ORCHAM AND BRUDJA WERE EVEN WORSE THAN WHAT HAD GONE BEFORE. THE COACH BOUNCED AND HEAVED OVER THE PITTED AND SCARRING DIRT ROAD. BUT AT LAST...

SO THIS IS BRUDJA! NO WONDER THAT DON'T HAVE THE ROAD HERE. ONLY A FOOL WOULD COME TO THIS GOD-FORSAKEN TOWN NOW! WHY EVERYTHING IS HOLDING WITH DECAYING ROT.



HEH, HEH! 'ONLY A FOOL', HE SAYS. PARSON MY AUNTIE FOR, KIDDED, BUT YOU'RE NEVER SEEN SACHA FOOL AS SACHA... RISING HIS EGG AND A \$22,000 FIDDLE TO REACH THIS HORRIBLE MAN-LET! YOU'LL SEE WHAT I MEAN.



VASILE IDOMA LIVES IN AN ANCIENT HOUSE AT THE EDGE OF TOWN. SACHA STOOD BEFORE THE MAN HE'D DREAMED SO LONG OF SEEING, BUT TIME HAD DONE ITS WORK ON HIS OLD TEACHER.

NO! I DON'T RECOGNIZE YOU! WHO ARE YOU? WHAT DO YOU WANT?

MAESTRO! IT'S YOUR OLD PUPIL... SACHA... SACHA BARAK!



SACHA, ALMOST WEPT AS HE LOOKED AT THE FACE OF HIS TEACHER... A FACE THAT HAD ONCE BEEN SO HANDSOME AND POWERFUL, AND NOBLE, BUT NOW WAS WITHERED AND TOOTHLESS, WITH PAGED WATERY EYES. VASILE WAS A WERE SHELL OF THE STRICT, STERN MAESTRO SACHA HAD SO LONG REVERED...

FORGIVE ME, SACHA! I DO NOT SEE AS WELL AS I USED TO! NOW \$000 OF YOU TO REMEMBER

AS IF I COULD EVER FORGET THE MAN WHO RECOGNIZED MY TALENT WHEN I WAS BUT A CHILD... AND TAUGHT ME ALL I KNOW



SUDDENLY, SACHA NOTICED THE OLD MAN STIFFEN. SAW HIS FACE BROW GREY AND HIS EYES FULL WITH TERROR...

SACHA! YOU SHOULD NEVER HAVE COME TO VISIT ME HERE IN BRUDJA! IT IS DANGEROUS.

DANGEROUS? WHY, MAESTRO?



THE OLD MAN LOOKED AROUND UNEASILY, THEN STARED AT HIS FORMER PUPIL, AND WHISPERED:

"DON'T YOU REMEMBER, SACHA? THIS IS WERE-WOLF COUNTRY? DON'T YOU RECALL THE INCIDENT THAT TOOK PLACE ALMOST TWENTY YEARS AGO WHEN I WAS LIVING IN GYMSHALL AND YOU USED TO COME FOR LESSONS?"

"HOW COULD I? SO MANY THINGS HAVE HAPPENED SINCE! WHAT INCIDENT?"



"DON'T YOU REMEMBER THAT YOUNG COUPLE? THEY'D DRIVEN HERE FROM BUDAPEST, IMPULSIVELY SEEKING A TOUR THROUGH THE TRANSYLVANIAN ALPS. THE RUBBED ROAD BETWEEN GYMSHALL AND ARANY HAD PROMISED TOO MUCH FOR THEIR MOTOR CAR."

"BE PATIENT, MARTA! I WILL FIND THE TROUBLE IN A MOMENT!"

"IF YOU DON'T, I SHALL FREEZE IN THIS MOUNTAIN NIGHT AIR, RUDDOLF!"



"A FULL MOON HAD RISEN, FILTERING THROUGH THE SHAGGED OLD TREES, AND AN OMINOUS SILENCE HAD ENVELOPED THE LONELY SURROUNDING COUNTRYSIDE. A RUSTLING OF HEAVY BRAMBLES CAUSED THE WOMAN TO TURN HER HEAD, AND WHAT SHE SAW BROUGHT A SOUL-PIERCING SCREAM FROM HER THROAT."

"RUDDOLF! EEEEEAA... WHAT IS IT, MARTA?"



"IT WAS A WERE-WOLF! IT SPRANG UPON THE YOUNG WOMAN, DRIVING ITS BLOOD-SHARP FANGS INTO HER SOFT WHITE FLESH. WHILE THE YOUNG MAN SCREAMED FROM BENEATH THE CAR."



"AAAAAAGHHHHHHH..."

"MARTA! MY GOD...!"

"DON'T YOU REMEMBER, SACHA? YOU HEARD THE SCREAMS, THE CROWLS... THE COMMOTION OUTSIDE. YOU WANTED TO GO..."

"NEVER MIND, SACHA! YOUR DEPART IS ONLY TWO WEEKS OFF! WE MUST PRACTICE. IT IS NOTHING! GET BACK TO YOUR MUSIC STAND!"

"BUT, MASTER! THERE MUST BE SOMETHING WRONG! LOOK! MEN RUNNING... WITH LANTERNS..."



"AS THE YOUNG MAN CAME AT THE SLOBBERING, SNARLING, BLOODTHIRSTY WERE-WOLF, IT FLED, SHAKING WITH HORROR. HE FLUNG HIS LANTERN AFTER THE FLEEING BEAST. THE LANTERN SHATTERED AGAINST A TREE TRUNK, BURNING INTO FLAME, AND HE SAW, BY THE SUDDEN LIGHT, HIS WIFE'S ARM DANGLING FROM THE WERE-WOLF'S GROWLING MOUTH."



"DON'T YOU REMEMBER THE WOMAN LYING BESIDE THE CAR, HER EYES STARRING, HER FACE ASHEN... AND HER HUSBAND LISTENING IN HORROR TO THE WORDS..."

"SHE'S DEAD! NO! OH, LORD...NO! MASTER! WHAT HAPPENED TO HER? COME AWAY, SACHA! COME AWAY!"



THE OLD TEACHER FINISHED HIS STORY WITH A SIGH. SACHA NOTICED THAT HE WAS SHAKING AND COVERED WITH SWEAT, AND HIS TOOTHLESS OLD MOUTH SMILED.

DON'T YOU LOSE YER' OF COURSE, REMEMBER? MAESTRO! I DO REMEMBER! BUT THE EXPLANATION OF THE INCIDENT WAS SIMPLE ENOUGH. THE WOODS ARE FULL OF WOLVES! THEY'VE BEEN KNOWN TO ATTACK A MAN



THERE HAVE BEEN MORE INCIDENTS, SACHA! HERE! READ THIS NEWS-PAPER SENT TO ME FROM BUCHAREST!

DO YOU EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE THERE IS A WEREWOLF HERE IN BRUJJA?



I ASK YOU TO BELIEVE THIS? SEE THE DATE? NEARLY TWO MONTHS AGO! READ

A MEMBER OF SUCH-ARREST SOCIETY PAID WITH HIS LIFE LAST NIGHT WHEN HE IGNORED THE WARNING TO STAY AWAY FROM THE TRAN-SYLVANIAN TOWN OF BRUJJA. THERE WAS A FULL MOON, AND HIS BODY, STRIPPED OF FLESH, WAS FOUND



THE OLD MAN POINTED TO THE ARTICLE IN THE NEWSPAPER.

"THERE WAS A FULL MOON," SACHA! A LUNATIC MOON! IN TWO DAYS, THERE'LL BE ANOTHER! I REFUSE TO DO NOT STAY IN BRUJJA!

NONSENSE, MAESTRO! I AM AS SAFE HERE AS YOU ARE! IF I AM NOT WELCOME IN YOUR HOME, I WILL GO TO THE INN. BUT I WILL NOT BE FRIGHTENED INTO LEAVING BRUJJA!



THE OLD MAESTRO SHRUGGED HIS SHOULDERS.

YOU WERE ALWAYS STUBBORN, SACHA! AND I DO WANT YOU TO STAY. IT'S JUST THAT, AT THIS TIME OF THE MONTH... AND A STRANGER IN TOWN... WELL... PROMISE ME YOU'LL KEEP YOUR BEDROOM WINDOWS AND DOOR LOCKED...

OF COURSE, MAESTRO! I KNOW HOW TO TAKE CARE OF MYSELF! LOOK



SACHA OPENED HIS SUITCASE AND TOOK OUT HIS REVOLVER...

I CARRY IT TO PROTECT MYSELF AND MY STRADIVARIUS.

A STRADIVARIUS? A GENUINE STRADIVARIUS? LET ME SEE!



OLD MAESTRO OPENED SACHA'S VIOLIN CASE AND DREW FORTH THE STRADIVARIUS. HE FOMOLED IT REVERENTLY AS SACHA STARED AT HIS GUN.

IF I REMEMBER RIGHT, MAESTRO, LEGEND HAS IT THAT ONLY A SILVER BULLET CAN KILL A WEREWOLF!

BEAUTIFUL! BEAUTIFUL! IT. DON'T SACHA? WHAT ARE YOU THINKING?



SACHA'S EYES NARROWED. HE SMILED CREEPY...

I'M THINKING ABOUT  
KILLING ME A WERE-  
WOLF, VASILE. DO YOU  
HAVE AN IRON KETTLE  
I MAY USE TO MELT  
DOWN SOME SILVER...

DON'T BE A FOOL,  
SACHA! WHY RISK  
YOUR LIFE?



I AM NO FOOL, MAESTRO!  
THINK OF THE PUBLICITY I  
WILL RECEIVE... HEADLINES  
IN ALL THE PAPERS THROUGHOUT  
EUROPE! 'FAMOUS VIOLINIST  
Frees ROMANY TOWN OF  
RAMPAGING WEREWOLFS!' YOU  
SEE, VASILE, THERE'S **MORE** TO  
SUCCESS THAN WERE **SONDS**!  
EVEN I MUST HAVE PUBLICITY!



SO STOP WORRYING  
ABOUT ME. TELL YOU  
WHAT? YOU MAY PLAY  
MY STRADIVARIUS AS  
LONG AS I STAY HERE.  
THERE? NOW GET ME  
THAT KETTLE...



SACHA SPENT THE NEXT FEW HOURS IN THE CELLAR,  
MELTING DOWN SILVER COINS AND POURING THE MOLTEN  
SILVER INTO A MOLD HE'D MADE BY PRESSING THE SLUG  
FROM AN ORDINARY BULLET INTO MOIST SALT. AND AS  
HE WORKED, GLEESING STRAINS OF A SAD WISTFUL AIR  
PLAYED ON THE STRADIVARIUS BY THE FALTERING HANDS  
OF HIS OLD TEACHER FILTERED DOWN FROM THE PARLOR...

MMMM! THE OLD BOY CAN STILL PLAY...



WHEN THE SILVER SLUGS WERE COOLED, SACHA  
REMOVED THE LEAD SLUGS FROM THE REGULAR BULLETS  
AND REPLACED THE SILVER ONES IN THE STEEL JACKETS.  
HE WENT UPSTAIRS, FILLED THE CHAMBERS OF HIS  
REVOLVER WITH HIS HANDWORK, AND PLACED THE GUN  
IN HIS OVERCOAT POCKET...

THERE, MAESTRO! NOW  
I'M READY FOR THE  
WEREWOLF OF  
BRADUA!

UGH FOWE, SACHA.  
SUCH MELLOW SOUNDS  
COME FROM THIS OLD-  
RIGIDS INSTRUMENT!



THE NEXT MORNING, EVEN THOUGH THE OLD MAESTRO  
WARNED HIM AGAINST IT, SACHA WALKED INTO TOWN.  
THE SUN BEAT DOWN ON THE MARKETPLACE, BUT THE WIND  
IT BROUGHT WAS NOT ENOUGH TO OFFSET THE COLD, SUS-  
PICIOUS STARES OF THE TOWNSFOLK...

MMMM! NOT A FRIENDLY FACE AMONG THEM!  
THE WAY THEY LOOK AT ME, YOU'D THINK I  
WAS THE WEREWOLF...



BUT THERE WAS MORE THAN SUSPICION AND GLO-  
RIOUS IN THE TOWNSPEOPLES STARES, SACHA SEEMED  
TO SENSE A CERTAIN TENSENESS... JOHANNES HOSTILITY,  
HE PLUNGED HIS HAND INTO HIS OVERCOAT POCKET,  
FEELING FOR THE BRASSIERS STEEL OF HIS  
REVOLVER...

CHOKE. MY GUN?  
IT'S GONE!



SACHA RETURNED AT ONCE TO VASILE KIRIA'S HOUSE. HE WAS VERY UPSET AND SPOKE BITTERLY TO THE OLD VIOLIN TEACHER...

I THOUGHT IT WAS ACCIDENTAL THAT SOMEONE JOSTLED ME WHEN I FIRST ENTERED THE MARKETPLACE, BUT NOW I REALIZE THAT HE MUST HAVE SPOLEN MY GUN. DO YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS, WASILE? ONE OF YOUR TOWNSPeOPLE IS THE WERE-WOLF!

NOW THAT YOUR GUN IS GONE, PERHAPS YOU WILL LEAVE?

SACHA SHRIED AT HIS TOOTHLESS MASTRO...

WAIT A MINUTE! HOW COULD ANYONE KNOW I HAD A GUN? HOW COULD THEY KNOW IT WAS LOADED WITH SILVER BULLETS? HOW COULD THEY? WASILE? YOU...

YES, SACHA! IT WAS I! I TOOK THE GUN FROM YOUR POCKET AND THREW IT DOWN THE WELL! IT WAS ONLY BECAUSE I AM AFRAID FOR YOU...



THE OLD MAN BEGAN TO CRY...

I DID IT FOR YOUR OWN GOOD, SACHA! NOW YOU ARE ANGRY AT ME!

ANGRY AT YOU? NO, WASILE! I AM TORMENTED BY YOUR CONCERN FOR MY SAFETY, BUT I HAVE NO INTENTION OF LEAVING BRADIA!

THAT NIGHT, A SIBBOS MOON, NOT QUITE FULL, BATHED THE OLD MASTRO'S HOUSE IN A GOLD PALE LIGHT. INSIDE, SACHA SCANNED A NEWS-PAPER WHILE WASILE PLAYED THE VALUABLE VIOLIN...

WHY THIS IS LAST MONTH'S BOOM-ARREST JOURNAL, WASILE. AND IT CAME TODAY.

THE MAIL IS SLOW! COMING TO BRADIA, SACHA! YOU CAN UNDERSTAND!



SACHA WAS WELL INTO THE PAPER BEFORE A REPORT CAUGHT HIS EYE. HE LEAPED UP WITH A START...

WASILE! LISTEN TO THAT! THERE WAS A FULL MOON LAST NIGHT WHEN FIVE PERSONS FROM CHIRAB BECAME GORNY WHILE CELEBRATING A WEDDING ANNIVERSARY AND WANDERED INTO THE OLD-FAMED TOWN OF BRADIA.



"...A SEARCHING PARTY FOUND THE FIVE BODIES THE NEXT DAY OUTSIDE THE TOWN. THEY HAD ALL BEEN STRIPPED OF THEIR FLESH! "BARE SKELETONS" UNIDENTIFIABLE!"

YES, SACHA! THAT HAPPENED LAST MONTH.

YOU SEE, IT HAS HAPPENED SO MANY TIMES TO SO MANY HUNDREDS OF POOR UNFORTUNATE PEOPLE OVER THE YEARS, THAT WE WERE IN BRADIA AND NO LONGER SHOCKED BY IT!

I RECALL SOMETHING I READ ON MY LAST CONCERT TOUR, WASILE! I WONDER... HMM! OF COURSE! HOW STUPID OF ME! TOMORROW, I AM GOING INTO CHIRAB FOR ANOTHER GUN...



EARLY THE NEXT MORNING, SACHA BARAK, THE FAMED VIOLINIST, WALKED THE SEVEN MILES TO DUNDAY IN ORDER TO PURCHASE THE GUN AND BULLETS HE NEEDED. HE CARRIED HIS EMPTY VIOLIN CASE.

I SHOULD HAVE GUESSED! WELL, TONIGHT THE MOON WILL BE FULL AND I WILL BE WAITING FOR THEM... IN THE MARKETPLACE.



IT WAS PAST NOON WHEN HE RETURNED TO VASILE'S HOME. HE APPEARED CONFIDENTIAL AS HE SHOWED THE OLD MAN THE GUN HE'S BOUGHT....

... AND TONIGHT I WILL GO INTO TOWN CARRYING MY VIOLIN CASE... AND WHO WOULD SUSPECT IT CONCEALS A GUN.



THE REST OF THE AFTERNOON WAS SPENT IN THE CELLAR, CAREFULLY MOLDING BULLETS FROM WOLFER SILVER.



AND WHEN TWILIGHT WAS BEGINNING TO SHROUD THE TOWN, SACHA RETURNED TO THE PARLOR WITH HIS SILVER AMMUNITION, LOADED HIS GUN, AND REPLACED IT IN THE VIOLIN CASE....

THERE? DONE? AND NOW GOOD EVENING, VASILE, DON'T YOU EVER TIRE OF PLAYING THE VIOLIN?

NOT THIS ONE, SACHA! NOT A STRADIVARIUS! BESIDES, YOU SAID I COULD PLAY IT WHILE YOU STRIED...



SACHA RESTED IN HIS ROOM, LISTENING TO THE LITING STRAINS OF THE VIOLIN. SUDDENLY HE FELT VASILE'S HANDS GRASPING HIM.

IT IS ALMOST TIME, SACHA! THE MOON IS ALMOST FULL! COME! LET US GO!

US?? NO SIR, OLD MAN! YOU'RE STAYING HERE! YOU TOLD ME YOURSELF IT WOULD BE DANGEROUS!



BUT VASILE INSISTED THAT HE WOULD FOLLOW SACHA ANYWAY, SO THEY WALKED INTO TOWN TOGETHER. ABOVE, THE MOON CAST AN EERIE GLOW UPON THE CORNESTONE STREETS. THE MARKETPLACE WAS DESERTED, YET SACHA WAS AWARE OF A FRIGHTENING PRESENCE—SOMETHING HE COULD ONLY FEEL INSTINCTIVELY. THE WEIGHT OF THE WEAPON IN THE VIOLIN CASE COMFORTED HIM.



AND THEN, SLOWLY, THE FRIGHTENING PRESENCE MADE ITSELF KNOWN. THE TOWNSPEOPLE... ALL OF THE POPULATION OF ARDOM... BEGAN TO APPEAR FROM ALLEYS AND DOORWAYS AND DEEP SHADOWS. THEY CAME TOWARD SACHA AND VASILE.





AS WAS THEY CAME, SACHA COULD SEE THEIR RED EYES GLOWING IN THE FULL MOONLIGHT, AND THE HAIR BRISTLING ON THEIR FACES, AND THEIR GLEAMING WHITE FANGS GRIPPING SPITTLE. HE COULD SEE THEIR SNARLING, GROOMING, WERE-WOLF PRODS, AND HE FETTERED IN DISGUST.



AND THEN SACHA BEGAN TO LAUGH. HE KNELT AND PLACED THE VIOLIN CASE ON THE COBBLE-STONES, FUMBLING WITH THE LATCHES...

I KNEW I WAS RIGHT! WHEN I READ IN THE PAPER THAT FIVE BODIES WERE STRIPPED OF THEIR FLESH, I KNEW THERE HAD TO BE MORE THAN ONE WEREWOLF!



HE SHRIEKED SHRIILLY AT THEM, HIS WORDS MINGLING WITH THEIR LOW THROATED GROWLS. HE OPENED THE VIOLIN CASE...

AND THEN I REMEMBERED A STORY I'D READ IN AN AMERICAN COMIC BOOK ON MY LAST CONCERT TOUR... A STORY CALLED 'MIDNIGHT MESS' IN A MAGAZINE CALLED TALES FROM THE CRYPT... ABOUT A TOWNFUL OF VAMPIRES! AND I KNEW I KNEW THAT DRUGJA WAS A TOWNFUL OF WEREWOLVES, AND I KNEW I'D HAVE TO BE READY FOR YOU...



THE SNARLING HOWLING BEASTS WERE ALMOST UPON HIM NOW... AND THEIR HOWLING SOUNDED LIKE LAUGHTER TOO. SACHA REACHED FOR THE SUN...

WELL, I AM READY FOR YOU. ALL OF YOU? BECAUSE I'VE GOT A GUN... LOADED WITH SILVER BULLETS? NOT JUST ANY GUN! A THOMPSON SUB-MACHINE GUN! I'M READY... FOR... FOR... GOOD LORD!



SACHA'S LAUGHTER CHOKED BACK IN HIS THROAT AND THE HOWLING CAME UP AS THE BEASTS SPRANG UPON HIM. FOR THERE WAS NO GUN-MACHINE GUN IN HIS VIOLIN CASE... ONLY A USELESS OLD STRADIVARIUS! AND HIS FLASHING DROOLING TEETH TORE AND RIPPED AND GORED SACHA. HE HEARD HIS OLD MAESTRO'S SCREAMING VOICE...



CAREFUL OF THE VIOLIN! AND SAVE SOME SOFT PART FOR A TOOTHLESS OLD WEREWOLF. REMEMBER? I BROUGHT HIM! I FIXED THINGS! I TOOK OUT THE GUN!

AND THAT'S MY VIOLIN! VIOLIN! FIDDLE. LET IT BE A LESSON TO YOU. DON'T FIDDLE AROUND WITH WEREWOLVES OR YOU MIGHT END UP LISTENING TO A FUNERAL MARCH IF SACHA'D ONLY HAD A BETTER MEMORY HE WOULD HAVE REMEMBERED THAT HIS OLD MAESTRO ALWAYS PULLED A SWITCH ON HIM. YOU'VE HEARD THE EXPRESSION, BEAT ME MAESTRO, RIGHT TO THE BODA FOUNTAIN! I AM WAS CENSORED BY A BLUEHOSE ASSISTANT EDITOR WE'VE GOT! NOW, THE WOLF-KEEPER ANKLE. I'LL



ONE YOU LATER MEAN WHILE, I'VE GOT A TOWN LERNALED! I'LL BLOW DON'T FORGET! THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB WANTS YOU. WHEN IF NOBODY ELSE DOES!

# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEH, HEH! AND NOW IT'S MY TURN TO FREEZE THE WATERY BLOOD IN YOUR DISTENDED VEINS, KIDDIES! SO VENTURE INTO THE VAULT OF HORROR... AND YOUR HOST IN HOWLS, THE VAULT-KEEPER, WILL ENTERTAIN YOU WITH ANOTHER SCREAM-STORY FROM MY COLLECTION OF TERROR TONES. I CALL THIS TALE-FAIR...

## BY THE DAWN'S EARLY LIGHT

J. KÖHLER

A BICKERING SWEET SMELL OF FLOWERS MIXED WITH THE BLUNT AROMA OF BURNING WAX. YELLOW CANDLE FLAMES FED ON WHAT FRESH AIR SEEPED INTO THE PARLOR OF HAYSON'S FUNERAL HOME. FRANK WILLIAMS LOOKED FOR THE LAST TIME AT JOAN LOHN'S LOVELY WHITE FACE, THE DEATH-MARK FACE OF HIS BRIDE-NEVER-TO-BE. MR. HAYSON TIFTED RESPECTFULLY ACROSS THE THICK RED CARPET AND SPOKE IN A DOLEFUL VOICE, JUST ABOVE A WHISPER... THE DEAD GIRL'S MOTHER'S SOFT, UNCEASING SOBS FORMING A BACKGROUND FOR THE UNGERTAKER'S IRONIC WORDS...

SHE'S BEAUTIFUL, MR. WILLIAMS. SHE WASN'T LIKE THAT WHEN THEY BROUGHT HER IN, BUT EARL PUT EVERYTHING HE HAD INTO THE JOB BECAUSE HE'S YOUR BEST FRIEND AND HE WAS TO BE YOUR BEST MAN.

YOU'LL... YOU'LL THANK EARL FOR ME... WHEN YOU SEE HIM!



HARRY MARTIN STEPPED FORWARD OUT OF THE SHADOWS, HE REACHED FOR FRANK'S ARM...

G'MOR, FRANK! LET'S GO. I'LL BUY YOU A DRINK!

TH-THANKS, HARRY!



FRANK WILLIAMS PICKED UP HIS BAGS AND LET HIMSELF BE LED FROM THE FUNERAL HOME. HE SMILED BITTERLY AT THE BIRM JOKER...

EARL BOTS MADE HER BEAUTIFUL FOR ME. A WEDDING PRESENT FROM MY BEST FRIEND...

OLD MAN HAYSON IS STUPID! FLAM STUPID!

WHAT AN IDIOTIC THING TO SAY!



THEY SAT IN A BOOTH IN THE ALMOST DESERTED BAR. FRANK WILLIAMS, STILL WEARING THE CLOTHES HE'D FLOWN FROM NEW YORK IN, AND HARRY WARTH, WITH THE BLACK ARM-BAND ON HIS SLEEVE...

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED, HARRY? WHAT'S ALL THIS 'BUNK' ABOUT A VAMPIRE KILLING JOAN?

THE PART ABOUT THE 'VAMPIRE' ISN'T 'BUNK,' FRANK! BUT THE VAMPIRE DIDN'T KILL JOAN. I DID! WE ALL DID!



WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

YOU'VE BEEN IN NEW YORK FOR THE PAST MONTH, SO YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON. SEE THE ARM-BAND? I'M IN MOURNING FOR MY BROTHER CHARLIE DIED LAST WEEK. THERE WERE TWO OTHER DEATHS THE WEEK BEFORE!



AND YOU'RE TRYING TO TELL ME THAT A VAMPIRE...

YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME, FRANK, BUT I SAW IT...THE VAMPIRE! I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT IT AND YOU'LL BELIEVE...



THE NIGHT AFTER CHARLIE'S FUNERAL, I GOT DOWN MY HUNTING RIFLE. I DIDN'T BELIEVE THE TALK ABOUT A VAMPIRE. I WAS GOING TO GET THE MANIAC THAT WAS SCREAMING OUR STREETS...

WHERE'RE YOU GOING WITH A GUN, HARRY? WHAT GOOD IS A GUN? YOU CAN'T KILL A VAMPIRE WITH A GUN! I-HEAD IT! YOU GOTTA USE A STAKE... A WOODEN...

I KNOW WHAT I'M DOING, HARRY! JUST LOCK THE DOOR BEHIND ME AND DON'T OPEN IT FOR ANYONE BUT ME!



"SO I WENT! EACH NIGHT I HUNTED THE MANIAC, WITH THE WIND HOWLING THROUGH THE DARK STREETS AND THE SNOW CRUNCHING UNDERFOOT..."

I'LL GET YOU! I'LL GET YOU FOR CHARLIE!



"FOR FIVE NIGHTS I WENT OUT INTO THE WINTER BLACKNESS, I GOT TO ASKING MYSELF WHAT GOOD IT WAS GOING TO DO WALKING IN THE BITTER COLD WITH THE SLEET WHIPPING IN MY FACE, BUT THEN I'D THINK OF POOR DEAD CHARLIE WITH THOSE TWO BLOODY PUNCTURES IN HIS THROAT, AND I'D KNOW THE ANSWER..."



MADE HARRY I'LL NEVER FIND HIM BUT I CAN'T QUIT! I CAN'T, NOW...

"THEN, ONE NIGHT, I HEARD A GURGUNG OY. THEN A MOANING JUST A LITTLE LOUDER THEN THE MOANING OF THE WIND. I STARTED RUNNING THROUGH THE DARK STREETS. AND THEN I SAW IT... BRIDGING OVER THE BODY OF A GIRL... ITS UGLY FANGS SUNG INTO HER THIN WHITE THROAT..."

GET AWAY FROM HER, YOU FILTHY WAMP!!

"I RAISED MY GUN, FIRING AS I RAN TOWARD IT. I HEARD THE BULLETS THUD INTO ITS WILE FLESH... SAW IT RISE..."

MY GOD! BULLETS DON'T KILL IT! IT IS A WAMPIRE... ONE OF THE LIVING DEAD! IT IS!

"I KEPT AFTER IT, EMPTYING THE RIFLE AT IT... FINALLY LOST IT. IT JUST SEEMED TO VANISH INTO THE SHADOWS. I WENT BACK AND LOOKED AT THE GIRL. SHE SEEMED TO BE BREATHING..."

TWO FINGERS IN HER THROAT, JUST LIKE IN CHARLIE'S...



HARRY'S VOICE RAGED. HE LOOKED AT FRANK SITTING ACROSS FROM HIM IN THE BOOTH IN THE DESERTED BAR...

THE GIRL... IT... WAS JOAN?

FEAR! JOAN LOREN I... I RAN ALL THE WAY TO THE FIREHOUSE. I STARTED PULLING THE BELL ROPE...



"THE FIRE-BELL WAS THE ONLY THING I COULD THINK OF TO GET THE TOWN OUT. I KEPT PULLING, MAKING ITS MOURNFUL SOUND SHATTER THE WINTRY SILENCE. AND THEY CAME! THEY CAME RUNNING..."

YOU SAW IT, HARRY? YOU SAW THE WAMP-PIRE?

DID IT GET ANYBODY?

I SAW IT! I SHOT AT IT! BULLETS DON'T KILL IT! IT... IT GOT THE LOREN GIRL.

"I TOOK THEM TO WHERE JOAN'S BODY LAY. DOC MORRIS LOOKED AT HER AND SHOOK HIS HEAD..."

BLOOD-DRAINED. ALL RIGHT! BUT SHE'S ALIVE SOMEHOW!

SOMETIMES A WAMPIRE'S VICTIM BECOMES A WAMPIRE. THE... THE ONLY WAY TO KILL IT IS...

... IS WITH A STAKE, DRIVEN INTO ITS HEART. AFTER DAWN...



"SOMEBODY GOT A STAKE AND WE STOOD A SILENT, BLOODY VIGIL OVER JOAN'S BODY. I FELT SICK INSIDE... AND COLD... EVEN WITH A NIGHTMAY FIRE GOING... BECAUSE OF WHAT WE HAD TO DO. AND THEN, WHEN DOC SAW THE FIRST IGY BLUE STREAKS OF DAWN IN THE EAST..."

IT'S TIME!



THEY HANDED ME THE STAKE, FRANK. I HELD IT AGAINST JOAN'S HEART. SOMEBODY ELSE STOOD OVER IT WITH A ROCK.



FRANK LISTENED, STUNNED, HIS FACE GROWING...

IT WAS AMBER, FRANK! THE BEST OF THEM. THEY COULDN'T TURN AWAY! BUT I HAD TO LOOK! I HAD TO SEE!

YOU LOUSY MURDERERS! YOU KILLED HERE!



HE REACHED OUT GRABBING HARRY...

WE HAD TO DO IT, FRANK. WE HAD TO! BY NOW, SHE'D BE SLEEPING IN A COFFIN WITH DIRT IN THE BOTTOM DURING THE DAY. AND AT NIGHT SHE'D BE ROAMING THE BACKSTREETS, THIRSTING FOR BLOOD! CHARLES GOT HIS AFTER THAT - JUST TO MAKE SURE! AND THE OTHERS! WE EXAMINED THEIR BODIES... DRAM STAKES INTO EACH OF THEIR HEARTS.



FRANK RELEASED HIS HOLD. HIS RAGE AND HATE WAS STILL THERE, BUT HE KNEW HARRY MARTIN AND THE OTHERS HAD DONE WHAT WAS RIGHT...

DON'T I SEND YOU THE TELEGRAM, FRANK, TELLING YOU TO COME RIGHT BACK HOME? DON'T I MEET YOU AT THE AIRPORT?



THAT NIGHT, FRANK WILLIAMS WENT ON A HUNT THROUGH HIS QUIET ILLINOIS TOWN. ARMED WITH A SHARP CRUELLY-Hewn WOODEN STAKE AND AN ANGER WITHIN HIM... A BUTTERFLY HATING ANGER...

I'LL GET THAT VAMPIRE! I'LL GET IT IF I HAVE TO LOOK FOREVER...



BUT FRANK DID NOT HAVE TO LOOK FOREVER. TOWARD MORNING, HE HEARD A BLOOD-CONGULING, GURGLESING MASP COMING FROM THE DARK STREET AHEAD. HE SPURTED THROUGH THE SNOW - SAW THE LOATHSOME HORRIBLE THING BENDING OVER ITS VICTIM, SUCKING ITS FILL OF BLOOD.



HARRY! IT'S GOTTEN HARRY!

HE REACHED FORWARD, HIS HEART POUNDING IN HIS CHEST SO LOUDLY THAT HE WAS SURE THE VAMPIRE COULD HEAR IT TOO. BUT IT WAS HIS CRUNCHING FOOT STEP IN THE SNOW THAT MADE HIS PRESENCE KNOWN...



BLAST! IT HEARD ME!

THE VAMPIRE, WITH ITS BLACK CAPE FLOWING BEHIND, DOOMED THROUGH ALLEYS AND DOWN NARROW WINDING STREETS, SEEMING AT TIMES TO ALMOST FLY. FRANK POUNDED AFTER IT IN BREATHLESS UNRELENTING PURSUIT...

CAN'T LET IT GET AWAY...



SUDDENLY HIS QUARRY DARTED AROUND A CORNER. BY THE TIME FRANK REACHED THE SPOT, THE VAMPIRE HAD VANISHED INTO THIN AIR...

IT MUST HAVE GONE INTO ONE OF THOSE BUILDINGS! IT MUST HAVE GONE...



FRANK TURNED, HIS GLANCE FALLING ON THE SOMBER FAMILIAR STRUCTURE... *NATSON'S FUNERAL HOME*... WITH JOAN STILL LYING IN HER COFFIN...

COFFIN OF COURSE! A VAMPIRE SLEEPS IN A COFFIN BY DAY. WHAT BETTER PLACE TO HIDE ONE?



HE CROSSED THE EMPTY DESERTED STREET, TRIED THE DOOR, FOUND IT OPEN. HE PULLED THE COIL OF ROPE HE'D BROUGHT ALONG FROM HIS POCKET, AND ENTERED CAUTIOUSLY...

JOAN TOLD ME ABOUT THE CELLAR, WHERE THEY STORE THINGS AND PREPARE BOOKS. PERHAPS DOWN THERE...



HE MADE HIS WAY ACROSS THE DARK PARLOR, BRUSHING AGAINST JOAN'S COFFIN. THERE WAS A STAIRCASE IN THE REAR. HE STRUCK A MATCH, STARTED DOWN, HIS SHADOW PERFORMING A GROTESQUE DANCE ON THE WALL BEHIND HIM...



CERTAINLY ARE PLenty OF COFFINS DOWN HERE. AND, CHUCK... A BODY...

HE MOVED FROM COFFIN TO COFFIN, PEERING INSIDE, SEARCHING FOR THE TELL-TALE SIGN. AND THEN...

HERE IT IS! THERE'S *SHIT* IN THE BOTTOM OF THIS ONE!



SUDDENLY, FRANK BLEW OUT THE MATCH! HE'D HEARD A SOUND...SIT GRINDING ON THE STAIRS ABOVE. HE CONFERED IN THE DARKNESS, LISTENING, WAITING, AS A FIGURE CAME SLOWLY DOWN THE STEPS...



THE FIGURE SLIDED ACROSS THE CELLAR, FRANK LEAPED, WRAPPING THE ROPE AROUND IT WITH LIGHTNING SPEED...

WHAT... WHAT'S GOING ON?? LET ME GO! HEY!

NOW WE'LL SEE WHO YOU ARE, YOU PINK...



FRANK FORCED THE BLENDER, WRAP FIGURE TO ITS KNEES... LASHED ITS HANDS BEHIND ITS BACK... AND FUMBLING FOR A MATCH...

EARL? EARL BOYD?

FRANK? WHY DON'T YOU LET ME KNOW YOU GOT HOME? SAY, IS THIS YOUR IDEA OF A JOKE? O' MOM! UNTIE ME!



YOU'RE THE VAMPIRE, AREN'T YOU, EARL, MY BEST FRIEND... A VAMPIRE? YOU'VE COME BACK HERE FOR YOUR SLEEP, HAVEN'T YOU?

ARE YOU CRAZY? YOU KNOW I WORK HERE AT NIGHT, FRANK?

THERE'S BLOOD ON YOUR MOUTH, EARL! IS IT A VAMPIRE'S BLOOD?

YOU KNOWED ME GOING FOR GOD'S SAKE, FRANK!

WHAT ABOUT THE GUY, EARL... THE GUY IN THE BOTTOM OF THIS COFFIN?

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, FRANK! JOAN'S DEATH MUST HAVE BEEN FOR A GOOD REASON FOR YOU! YOU'RE OUT OF YOUR MIND!



OUT OF MY MIND, AM I? ALL RIGHT? THEN YOU WON'T MIND PROVING YOU'RE NOT THE VAMPIRE! YOU WON'T MIND BEING TIED UP IN THAT COFFIN...

IN THAT COFFIN? NO??

BECAUSE IF YOU ARE THE VAMPIRE, YOU'LL FALL ASLEEP SOME SOMETIME, AND WHEN YOU DO, I'LL BE READY WITH THIS SWORD, SET IN!

FRANK! I KNOW HOW MUCH JOAN MEANT TO YOU. BUT WHY BLAME IT ON ME? I LOVED YOU BOTH! I WAS GOING TO BE YOUR BEST MAN! I...

GET INTO THAT COFFIN AND SHUT UP! IT'S ALMOST SEVEN BLURK DAWN TO BE VERY SOON!



EARL RELAXED. SUDDENLY, HE CLOSED INTO THE COFFIN. FRANK TIED HIM SECURELY AND STARTED UP THE STEPS.

WHERE YOU GOING, FRANK?

UNFRAINED THERE ISN'T A WINDOW IN THIS PLACE. I WANT TO SEE THE SUN RISE...

THAT CALENDAR WILL TELL YOU, FRANK. IT'LL TELL YOU THE EXACT TIME THE SUN RISES.

YOU'RE RIGHT, EARL! LET'S SEE. TODAY IS THE TENTH. THERE IT IS! SUNRISE... 7:15 A.M.

FRANK LOOKED AT HIS WATCH...

THAT'S FIVE MINUTES FROM NOW, EARL. FIVE MINUTES!

YOU'LL SEE! YOU'LL SEE! I'M NOT THE VAMPIRE!

THE MINUTES CRUMBLD BY. FRANK PEERED AT HIS WATCH. THE CAME AND WENT. EARL WAS WIDE AWAKE. 2:30 CAME. FRANK HURLED THE STAKE AWAY IN DISBELIEF...

IF YOU WERE THE VAMPIRE, YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN ASLEEP BY NOW!

BEST I TOLD YOU! AND THE REAL VAMPIRE... THE ONE WHO DOES THIS COFFIN... WAS GOT TEN AWAY! UNTIL ME!

FRANK UNTIED EARL. EARL GRINNED AT HIM... A STRANGE GRIN... AN EVIL, LEERING GRIN.

YOU'VE BEEN IN NEW YORK, HAVEN'T YOU, FRANK?

Y-YEAH! I FLEW BACK THIS AFTERNOON... WHEN I GOT HARRY TELEGRAM! TOOK THE FLEO PLANE OUT OF... OUT OF...

EARL'S LEERING GRIN CHANGED AS HE SPRANG. FRANKS ERUPTED FROM BEHIND HIS CHARKING LIPS. FRANK SCREAMED...

MY GOD! HOW STUPID OF ME! IT LINGS IS AN HOUR BEHIND NEW YORK!

THAT'S RIGHT, FRANK! YOU FORGOT TO CHANGE YOUR WATCH. I'VE GOT PLENTY OF TIME TILL SUNRISE! ANOTHER HALF-HOUR! ENOUGH TO DRINK MY FILL... AGAIN!

HEH... HEH! NOW ISN'T THAT A BLOODY SHAME, DEAREST? JUST BECAUSE FRANK'S WATCH WAS A LITTLE FAST HIS TIME RAN OUT. YOU MIGHT SAY FRANK CAME TO A DEAD STOP! WELL, YOU'LL COME TO A DEAD STOP

WHEN YOU SEE THE STUFF YOU GET WHEN YOU JOIN THE E. C. FAN-ADICT CLUB. SEE THE AD FOLLOWING THE TEXT FOLLOWING THIS YEAR FOR INFO. I'LL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MAG. THE VAULT OF HORROR! 'BYE NOW



## ON ICE!



Plimpton fingered the wad of bills as he slipped through the shattered basement window. Stepping carefully over the shards of glass, he slipped his cigarette lighter from his pocket and glanced around the murky room. There was enough scrap paper scattered on the floor to make his job a snap. He picked up a crumpled wad of paper: printed on it was the name of the firm whose plant he was about to destroy by arson. He shrugged his shoulders and spun the flywheel of his lighter, if the owner of Freeze-Out Frozen Food Lockers wanted to pay a bundle to have the joint go up in smoke, who was Plimpton to argue?

A minute later he had emptied his tiny cans of lighter fluid in the right places. A sprinkle of the liquid here... a dribble of it there... and the scattered debris was primed for the match. Wadding the saturated paper under a wooden desk that would be sure to catch fire rapidly, he checked the minute details which would make this job a complete success. Several trails of tightly twisted paper radiated out from the doomed desk, one leading to a wooden filing cabinet, another crossed the floor to stacks of paper-packaging in which foods to be consigned to the big freezers were wrapped. One minute for the critical wad of fluid-soaked paper to catch fire, and the whole dump would be a seething inferno. He had just one minute in which to scramble out through the shattered basement window... he could do it easily. There was no question in his mind: this job was as good as on ice!

Plimpton smiled to himself, thinking of the wad of bills in his pocket... and the still greater amount waiting for him when he rendezvoused with Mr. Freeze-Out Frozen Food Lockers. Then, suddenly, there was the sound of a door opening some where behind him.

In one convulsive moment Plimpton darted across the room, swung open the ponderous door of a huge enameled chest and hurled himself into the big freezer. He flamed himself against sharp-cornered food cartons crammed into the huge refrigerator, leaning the lid close almost completely as a flashlight probed toward him out of the darkness. Through the scant inch between the freezer and the lid, he saw the old watchman advancing toward him slowly. Plimpton tensed to leap free of the box, but before he could move, the heavy lid had been slammed shut from the outside. The lock on the freezer lid snapped audibly.

Plimpton's fingers scratched frantically at the door, but the big chest was sealed tight. He screamed in anguish and pounded on the ice-crusted inner surface... already the numbing cold was strangling the breath in his lungs. His stiff fingers whirled the flywheel of the lighter and a bluish flame leaps up. The heat did little to dispell the awful cold.

Two minutes passed... three... then the flame flickered and died. Plimpton tried to hammer on the frosted metal, but his arms were useless stumps... and deep inside his agonized body a core of icy fire went pulsating shocks along every nerve and fiber.

In a frenzy he struggled to move, but his body was held rigidly now by the chill embrace of the frozen packages. He opened his mouth to scream, but his spittle became a tracery of gagging ice over his cracked lips. His tongue began to swell and turn blue-purple... the color of a flame that, moments before, was poised to touch off a searing fire. He moaned once, and then became merely another consignment of quick-frozen meat.



# YOU, TOO, CAN MEET NEW FRIENDS! JOIN THE **E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB!**

SEND FOR YOUR MEMBERSHIP KIT TODAY. RECEIVE A FULL-COLOR 7½ X 10½ ILLUMINATED CERTIFICATE, A STURDY WALLET IDENTIFICATION CARD, A SHAZZIE EMBROIDERED SHOULDER PATCH, AND A STUNNING ANTIQUE BRONZE-FINISH BAS-RELIEF PIN.

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THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB  
ROOM 706  
225 LAFAYETTE STREET  
NEW YORK, 12, N.Y.

Here's my two bits! I want the things  
and stuff like the kid's wearing! I want  
to meet new friends like the kid's meeting!  
I'm a fan-addict! I'm mad!

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

ZONE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_

# THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

Well, isn't it amazing how additions to the EC HORROR HIT PARADE keep pouring in from you clever little creeps. Some of 'em are gittin' pretty scary though... let's look at The following selections were suggested by: Leonard Blumwood, Steve Falls, S. D., Billy Wilson, Queens Village, L. I.; Pete and Betty Anzari, Los Vegas, N. M.; Walter Legerstadt, Corvallis, N. Y.; Arnold Schaefer and Judy Knight, Detroit, Mich.; and Donna C. Thompson, Elgin Field, Ill.

IN SEAMS I STITCH YOUR HAND, MADAM  
I COME FROM ALABAMA WITH A HANSHIE  
ON MY KNEE  
GORGIN ON MY MIND  
ON KENNY GRIEVE, SWEET JENNY GRIEVE  
I'M AGHIN TO BLIND YOU  
TRYING WITH A SCALPEL  
SAY, SEE BONES!  
IF I KNEW YOU WERE COMING, I'D A  
MILKED A SNAKE  
I LOATHE YOU A BUNDEL AND A PECK  
GAND A HOPE AROUND YOUR NECK  
WHILE DROOLING IN THE DARK, ONE DAY  
TILL MY VAULES AGAIN WITH GOO  
TRAIN ON THE ROOF  
THE THIRD MAN SCREAM  
OH, MAINED PAPA  
IT WOULD TAKE MORE THAN TO HACE UP  
WILD COMPOSES  
CARRY MY SACE TO OLE VIRGINIA  
FRANCING WITH SPEARS IN MY EYES

And from E. Nelson Bradwell of Oklahoma City, we received the following LURID LYNCS to THE GHOUL THAT'S HARRY.

The ghoul that I marry will have to be  
As dismal and grey as a mortuary  
The ghoul I call my own  
Would be greatly improved if she used some  
cologne  
Her claws will be sharpened, and in her hair  
See I wear a great eyebeads (she's not all  
there!)  
Stand of little, I'll be stiller  
Next to her, and I'm sure I'll be better.  
A couple six can carry  
The ghoul that I marry must be

Michael Fitzgerald of S.F.C. and Gordon Lewis, Jr. of Atlanta, Ga. suggest the following PUTRID PRO-GRONES

I BLEED THREE WIVES  
GHOST OF THE TOWN  
THE EDGE FISHED HER BLOW  
EAT THE CLOCK  
GREATEST FRIGHTS OF THE MORTUARY  
TROUBLE OR NOTHING  
FLAYHOUSE OF SCARS  
HUNG DR. MARGIE

Clay Kimball of Draper, N. C. and Sally Anne Shaw of Houston, Tx suggest the following EVIL, ENTER-TAINERS

TERESA SIWER  
MUSTY VAPOR  
SID SQUEEZER  
IMMOGNE CHOKIES

Stanford Grossman of Detroit, Mich. suggests a new dept. **CRUDDY COMICS**

IGGS AND MAGGOTS  
BRINGING UP BLOOMER  
TIM TYLER'S MOGE  
STEVE NODD HER  
MICKY'S PERNED  
ERRY'S WAGE  
HER HEART AND JULIE'S BONES

The LURID LITERATURE following was donated by Doug Stewart of:

YOM'S NUMS  
MUMFEL'S STILL SKINNED  
THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTE  
THE THREE MUSKET'S EARS  
UNCLE TOM'S STASSEN  
AROUND THE WORLD IN EIGHT SLAYS  
MY DEAR SLAYED HER  
THE LADY ON THE STAKE

PERVERTED POETRY by Cecile Ashlett of Baltimore, Md.

When I was buried at sweet sixteen  
Ghouls came to my funeral, it seemed.  
They said they were sorry that I was dead.  
And one of them began to march on my head  
They said I was pretty and very sweet!  
And another began to march on my feet.  
They said I was nice, with money young charms  
And then, they began to march on my arms  
They said they were sorry I'd had to depart.  
Then someone reached in and tore out my heart.  
 Luckily I awake from this terrible dream  
But then I really began to scream  
For there in my room sitting on stools  
Was my mother, my father and six other ghouls!

Just enough room for a toilet:

Dear Grossman,

In case you don't know, American magz have all more copies than local ones. And among the comic books I.C. sells fastest, according to the owner of my favorite stand. They are to comic book creeps what Marilyn Monroe is to movie maniacs

Tony Abney  
Memphis, T.N.

Memphis, where the envelopes come from!

Comes to this: I.D. magz! THREE DIMENSIONAL TALES FROM THE CRYPT OF FEARFUL, amazing gothic truly... and THREE DIMENSIONAL EC CLASSICS! (6c each... or two for \$1.00 just mail in the magz! Sub- scriptions to this mag... one that'll right away! Address for P.D. orders, cash orders, home-on-type orders, or post please use mail to:

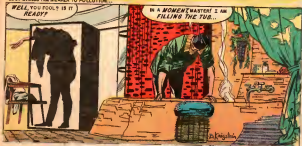
The Crypt-Keeper  
Room 704, Dept. 42  
215 Lafayette Street  
N.Y.C. 12, N.Y.

**THIS YARN IS DRIPPING WITH  
SWEET AND CLEAN HORROR...**

# THE BATH



MY MASTER IS A VERY STRANGE MAN. AT TIMES HE IS LIKE A WILD ANIMAL, SO CRAZED IS HE WITH HIS LUST FOR SILVER. AND AT OTHER TIMES, HE IS ALMOST LIKE AN OLD WOMAN, SO DEVOTED IS HE TO HIS PERSONAL CLEANLINESS. HE BATHES CONSTANTLY, AS IF HE WERE ABLE TO SCRUB HIS EVIL DEEDS AWAY WITH FOAMING BATH SOAP AND SCENTED SALTS. LISTEN TO HIM, NOW... SCREAMING AT ME! SUCH CARELESSNESS! SUCH IMPATIENCE! AS IF EACH MOMENT LOST BRINGS HIM NEARER TO POLLUTION...



MY MASTER IS BEHÖR FÜRDER TOSOGA. HERE, ON HIS PLANTATION IN THE MATO JUNGLE, HE IS ABSOLUTELY KING AND I, ... I AM HIS MAN-SERVANT. I HAVE BEEN HIS MAN-SERVANT FOR MANY YEARS. I HAVE SEEN AND HEARD MANY THINGS...

MY NAME IS RADU, VINDOGA. IT IS I WHO UNDRESSES BEHÖR TOSOGA. IT IS I WHO PREPARES HIS BATH. IT IS I WHO PERFUMES THE WATER AND SCRUBS HIS BACK AND WASHES HIS EVILNESS AWAY...



SEÑOR TOMOSA NEED NOT ANSWER MY QUESTION. I ALREADY KNOW WHAT HIS ANSWER WILL BE. SEÑOR TOMOSA LOVES HIS BATH-SALTS AND HIS GEMDORALS AND HIS PERFUMES. TO TRY A NEW ONE IS ALMOST A NECESSITY. DO I NOT WRITE EACH WEEK FOR NEW BATH PRODUCTS TO BE SENT FROM THE COAST? BUT I WAIT FOR HIS EXPECTED ANSWER...

AND AS I OPEN THE LID OF THE CAN, I THINK BACK OVER THE MANY YEARS I HAVE SPENT WITH THE GREAT SEÑOR. BATHING, LET ME SAY, IS NOT HIS ONLY PLEASURE. THERE ARE MANY OTHERS. TAKE, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT DAY SO LONG AGO...



OF COURSE, STUPID! WHY DO YOU ALWAYS BOTHER ME WITH SUCH QUESTIONS? IS IT LAVENDER OR PINE?

A NEW MENTURE, MASTER. IT WILL CLEANSER YOU AS YOU HAVE NEVER BEEN CLEANSER BEFORE.



THOSE LAST WRETCHES ARE HOLDING BACK PRODUCTION WHY CAN'T THEY WORK FASTER? RAOUL! STAY NEAR ME WITH THAT PAN! BATH THIS SUN! IT WILL MAKE ME SWEAT WHEN I BEAT THEM...

YES, MASTER!

HOW HAPPY HE WAS WHEN THE NATIVES JEREMIED TO HIS WIFE STING. AND NOW THEY CRIED AND MOANED IN MISERY. SEÑOR TOMOSA LOVED HIS SILVER MINE, HIS PLEASURE, AND HIS WEALTH THEY BRING HIM. BUT MOST OF ALL, HE LOVES TO BATH.

AND I, HIS FAITHFUL SERVANT, WOULD BE AT HIS SIDE, READY TO DO HIS BIDDING...

FOR I KNEW THAT SEÑOR TOMOSA ALWAYS INSISTED UPON BATHING AFTER ONE OF THOSE DAILY CONTACTS WITH THE NATIVES...



WORK HARDER, YOU DOGS! SHOW SOME RESPECT FOR MY AUTHORITY. WORK HARDER OR YOU'LL GET NOTHING BUT BREAD AND WATER TO EAT!

FILTHY CARNOR! THEY'VE MADE ME EXERT MYSELF. SMOKE, RAOUL! THE ANTISEPTIC SPRAY I DO NOT WANT TO DEVELOP A FEVER

YES, MASTER. AND I WILL PREPARE YOUR BATH AT ONCE!

AH-H-H-H! JEREMO JEREMO! THE VERY CHANGING DUST FROM THOSE CREATURES HAS BEEN WASHED DOWN THE DRAIN...

WILL YOU WANT THE ROUGH POWEL OR THE SMOOTH MASTER?



I KNEW THAT HE FELT POLLUTED AND DEFILED UNTIL HE COULD CLEANSER HIMSELF OF THE AURA OF HIS CONTACT WITH HIS WORKERS.

I WILL TRY THE ROUGH POWEL TODAY, RAOUL. IT WILL CIRCULATE MY BLOOD AND ELIMINATE ANY DIRT PARTICLES THAT MAY HAVE REMAINED IN MY PORES. THOSE... FILTHY WRETCHES!

YOU ARE DISPLEASED ABOUT SOMETHING, MASTER?



ES LA HEROSA RAOUL! I WILL REMAIN A POOR MAN AT THE RATE THOSE LAST DEVILS WORK MY MINE. STARTING TOMORROW, I WILL START A NEW POLICY WITH THOSE BROTHERS! EACH MAN MUST OBEY HIS MIGHTY SILVER ORE. OR HE WILL BE LASHED SPREAD-EAGLED IN THE SUN FOR TWO DAYS WITH NO FOOD OR WATER.



YES, EL SEÑOR TOSOSA WAS A MUCH RESPECTED MAN. HAD HE NOT COME HERE TO THE **MATTO ARRABO** AND WORKED HIS SILVER MINE WITH THE HELP OF THE NATIVES? HAD HE NOT PROMISED TO TREAT THEM FAIRLY IF THEY WOULD WORK FOR HIM? HAD HE NOT BUILT A MARVELOUS PLAYACHOFF AND SURROUNDED HIMSELF WITH GOLD AND JEWELS AND OTHER TREASURES? HAD HE NOT DONE ALL THESE THINGS? HAD HE NOT DONE THE **OTHER** THINGS TOO...



WE CANNOT MOAN ANY HARDER THAN WE ARE **WORKING**, MASTER. WE DO NOT GET ENOUGH **FOOD**. OUR STOMACHS **BROIL**, AND WE SLOWLY **FIND**, OUR FAMILIES **STARVE**. FOR FAVOR, MASTER.

YOU DARE **DEFILE** ME WITH YOUR **TOUGH SET BACK**, YOU **POOR** **BACK**!

HAD HE NOT BEATEN AND KICKED AND CURSED AND THREATENED THE NATIVES INTO SUBMISSIONS...

AND HERE'S MY **ANSWER**! TAKE...**GOOF** THIS BACK TO YOUR WORM-INFESTED BUTS. TELL THEM...**GOOF**...GET BY ORDERS OF **DUE**?

**GOOF WWWW**



BUT ALWAYS AFTER THESE DISGUSTING EXPERIENCES...THESE CONTACTS WITH THE NATIVES...MY MASTER WOULD TAKE HIS BATH. FOR THAT SEEMED TO BE THE ONLY THING THAT WOULD CALM HIM AND PUT HIM INTO A GOOD HUMOR AGAIN.

IF I CATCH ANYTHING FROM THAT MISERABLE TOAD, I'LL HAVE HIM **HACKED TO DEATH**!

THE WATER IS **NOT**, MASTER!



THE WATER WOULD LAKE HIM GENTLY, SMELLING OF SOAP AND PERFUMES AND BATH SALTS...

AH! **GOOF**! THE **WATER**, THE **BETTER**! I MUST CLEAN THEIR **SLIME** FROM ME, **RAUL**! I MUST REMOVE THEIR **POLLUTION**!



AND AFTERWARD, WHEN HE WOULD DRESS...

MY FACE LOOKS **GOOF** TODAY, **RAUL**! SO SMOOTH AND WHITE AND **CLEAN**!

YES, MASTER!



THEN AND ONLY THEN, WHEN HE FELT THAT HIS BODY HAD BEEN PURGED OF ANY CONTAMINATION, WOULD SEÑOR TOSOSA BE IN HIGH SPIRITS. AND MANY WERE THE NIGHTS I WOULD STARE AND WATCH HIM COUNT HIS GOLD AND CHECK HIS DAY'S PRODUCTION...

THE **VENTILATORS** AND **AIR PURIFIERS** ARE WORKING, MASTER!

**GOOF**! **GOOF**! I... WHAT IS **THIS**? ONLY **THREE TONS** OF **SILVER** **ONE** **DUB** TODAY! I'M BEING **CHEATED**!



ONLY **THREE TONS** OF **DUB**? I'LL TEACH THEM TO **CHEAT**! **MEP** I'VE BEEN **LENIENT** **LONG ENOUGH**! FROM NOW ON I'LL **SHOW** THEM THAT I **MEAN**! WHAT I **SAID**! FROM NOW ON I'LL **DRIVE** THEM AS THEY'VE **NEVER** BEEN **DRIVEN** **BEFORE**!



AND WHEN MY MASTER WAS ANGRY LIKE THAT, I KNEW THAT MY DUTIES WOULD BE HEAVY AND TRYING. THAT THERE WOULD BE MANY MORE BATHS.

YOU'LL ALL WORK HARDER AND LONGER! I'M INCREASING YOUR HOURS TO MAKE YOU REALIZE THAT MY ORDERS ARE NOT MERELY JOLE WORDS... THAT YOU...

COUSIN COUGH?



BUT WORST OF ALL WERE THE DAYS WHEN THE UNEXPECTED HAPPENED.

YOU COUGHED? YOU FILTHY DOG! YOU SPREWED YOUR DIRTY GERMS UPON ME. I'LL FIX YOU! GUARDS! GUARDS!

NO, MASTER! I COULDN'T HELP IT! HERE, FOR DIES!



SEÑOR TOBOSA WOULD SHRINK FOR HIS GUARDS AND THEY WOULD CLOSE IN ON THE POOR SICK NATIVE WHO DARED INSULT HIM.

TAKE HIM AWAY! SEW HIS MOUTH SHUT! TORTURE HIM! KILL HIM!

NO! NO! YAAAYYY!!!



ON THOSE DAYS, ALL WOULD FEEL HIS WRATH. IT WAS BEST TO OBEY HIM INSTANTLY OR SUFFER DRAKE CONSEQUENCES.

SPRINT THE ROOM! BRING ME MY METAL VAPORIZER! DRAW MY BATH! QUICKLY, RAQUEL! IF I COME DOWN WITH A COLD...

YES, MASTER!



I REMEMBER THE DAY EL SEÑOR RAISED THE NEARBY NATIVE VILLAGE FOR MORE WORKERS...

NO! PLEASE! DON'T TAKE OUR SON AWAY! HE IS TOO WEAK... TOO YOUNG! HE WILL NOT STAND THE STRAIN! WE NEED OF YOU. TAKE US, BUT...

STAND BACK, YOU OLD FOOL! HE IS CAPABLE OF OUR-SING! HE WILL COME WITH US...



FOR AFTER THAT, THINGS WERE NOT THE SAME. THE BOY INSULTED EL SEÑOR. OFTEN, UNDER THE HOT, BLAZING SUN, WHEN THE OTHER FORCED LABORERS STAGGERED BACK AND FORTH FROM THE MINE, SCARCELY ABLE TO STAND, SEÑOR TOBOSA WOULD PICK ON THE BOY.

WORK, I SAID! GET BACK ON YOUR FEET, SCUM! DO AS I SAY! YOUR LIFE IS MINE! BACK ON YOUR FEET!



AND THEN HE WOULD COME PANTING AT ME, ABHORRED BY HIS EXPERIENCE.

I AM CLUTED WITH TREACHEROUS WORKERS AND WEAKLING BOYS! BASTA! ENOUGH! MY ARMS ARE WEARY FROM BEATING THEM. I FEEL FILTHY FROM BEING NEAR THEM. RAQUEL! MY BATH...



YES, I REMEMBER IT WELL... ALL OF IT. THE BOY GREW WEAKER AND WEAKER UNDER THE CHLASHES OF MY MASTER'S ANGRY BEATINGS, FINALLY COLLAPSING... TODAY.

I REMEMBER HOW THE BOY'S PARENTS RUSHED FROM THEIR STATIONS TO THEIR DEAD SON'S SIDE.

HE... HE IS DEAD, MASTER!

BAH! HE WAS LIKE A JOY! I SHALL HAVE TO FIND WORKERS WITH MORE STAMINA!

YOU HAVE DONE THIS TO OUR SON, YOU FAT PORCEN! FIE! YOU HAVE TAKEN AWAY... OUR OVERSIGHT!

YOU ARE EVIL! I WOULD LIKE TO SQUEEZE YOUR FAT OILY NECK!

KEEP AWAY!



HOW THEY FOOLISHLY ATTACKED MY MASTER.

SCRATCH HIS FIE EYES OUT, JAHN! LET HIM FEEL THE PAIN AND MISERY THAT PLAGUES OUR PEOPLE!

SWINE! MURDERING SWINE!

KEEP AWAY! KEEP... I'M CONTAMINATED! TAKE YOUR SLIMY HANDS OFF... ME.



AND HOW THEY EACH FELT THE STINGING BULLETS FROM EL SEÑOR'S GLEAMING REVOLVER...



I REMEMBER HOW HE STOOD OVER THEM, SHUDDERING IN REVULSION...

I'LL TEACH YOU TO VIOLATE BY PERSON... TO DARE TOUCH ME WITH YOUR GRABBY HANDS! I'LL LET YOUR CARCASSES ROT IN THE SUN.



...HOW HE SCREAMED AT THE OTHERS.

NOW GET BACK TO WORK, YOU SWINE! OR YOU'LL ALL ROT IN THE SUN WITH THEM!



HOW HE CAME IN PANTING...

MY BATH, RAJAL! GET MY BATH READY! I MUST CLEANSE MYSELF OF THEIR FILTH...

YES... MASTER.





SO I OPEN THE LID OF THE CAN AND I EMPTY ITS CONTENTS INTO MY MASTER'S BATH. IT IS A BIG CAN BUT HE DOES NOT SEE ME DO THIS...



I LEAD MY MASTER TO THE TUB AS I HAVE DONE SO OFTEN...



THE BOARDS CRACK UNDER MY FAT MASTER'S WEIGHT AS I HELP HIM INTO THE TUB.



I LISTEN TO HIS SCREAMS OF PAIN AS HE SINKS INTO THE SWIRLING AND BOILING BATH WATER...



I LISTEN TO MY MASTER SCREAM, JUST AS THE BOY HE BEAT TO DEATH SCREAMED, AND THE BOY'S PARENTS HE SHOT TO DEATH SCREAMED, FOR MY MASTER'S BATH HAS BEEN FILLED WITH A CANFUL OF THE TERRIBLE, FRY-SAVAGE-FLESH-EATING, PIRAHANA FISH OF THE MATTO GROSSO...



THE SILVERY PIRAHANA... RIPPING, TEARING, STRIPPING MY MASTER'S FAT FLABBY FLESH FROM HIS BONES... CLEANSING HIM AS HE HAS NEVER BEEN CLEANSERED BEFORE... AVENGING THE BOY... AND HIS PARENTS, WHO WERE ALSO MY PARENTS.



# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEL, HEL! HOBBLE INTO 'THE HAVEN OF FEAR,' NIGHTS, AND YOUR SHIVER-CHEF, YOUR SLOP-SERVER, YOUR HOSTESS-IN-HEAVEN, THE OLD WITCH, WILL FEED YOU FOUL FARE FROM HER GRUDGY CAULDRON. YER, IT'S BE' HEATH, READY TO WIND UP LK'S MASH WITH ANOTHER FRY! ITEM FROM MY MORNING MENU, SO OPEN YOUR BAYING LITTLE MOUTHS AND I'LL POP IN THE PUTRID POT-PORE I CALL...

## HOODWINKED!

THE AIR IS STEPPING IN THE OLD HOUSE... STIMMING OF WHISKEY AND MOONING AND QUIET AND SWEAT, THE SHADY FURNITURE, USUALLY SO ORDERLY, SHOWS SIGNS OF THE STRUGGLE THAT HAS TAKEN PLACE. LEON LETS HIS GAZE WANDER ABOUT THE ROOM... STIMING AT THE STAINED, AGED WALLPAPER WITH THE FADED, BICE-SAY PATTERN... THE FOUR BAD WALLS... AS IF THEY MIGHT TELL HIM WHAT THEY'VE WITNESSED BEFORE HE'D GOTTEN HOME. HE GLANCES QUICKLY INTO THE BATHROOM ACROSS THE HALL, STUTTING WHAT LIES THERE ON THE HARD COLD FLOOR. THE GORSE RISES IN HIS THROAT AND SPICKS IN IT, HIS EYES DART TO HIS BROTHER... TO CHET'S TORN SHIRT AND THE SCORCHES. CHET LOOKS UP AT LEON, TRYING TO READ WHAT IS IN HIS EYES, BUT THEY TELL HIM NOTHING. FINALLY CHET SCREAMS...



AREN'T YOU GOING TO FELL AT ME, LEON? AREN'T YOU GOING TO GET MAD? DON'T JUST STAND THERE! SAY SOMETHING!



LEON'S FACE IS COOL, HIS MOUTH IS A SPARK TIGHT LINE. CHET SHAKES... LODGING DOWN AT THE FLOOR...

WHY DON'T YOU HIT ME, LEON? WHY DON'T YOU BEAT ME TO A BLOODY PULP? WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? WHAT ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT?

I'M THINKING ABOUT HOW THIS WHOLE CRAZY THING GOT STARTED. I'M THINKING ABOUT WHAT A FOOL I WAS... TWENTY YEARS AGO...



TWENTY YEARS AGO, WHEN MA WAS UPSTAIRS, LIVING IN HER BED, SLEEPING FOR BREATH...

AND SHE MADE ME PROMISE...  
HE'S A BABY, LEON! TAKE CARE OF HIM! YOU'LL BE... ALL ALONE... JUST THE TWO... OF... YOU, PROMISE ME...

MAMA... MOM... MAMA?

I PROMISE, MA! I'LL LOOK AFTER CHET. I'LL KEEP HIM WITH ME... I'LL WORK FOR HIM... I'LL... I'LL...

MA NEVER HEARD THAT PROMISE, CHET? I MADE IT, BUT IT FELL ON DEAF EARS. SHE WAS DEAD...

MOM... MOM... SPEAK TO ME...  
CHET'S... BOB... SOMETHING...



YOU DON'T REMEMBER IT VERY WELL, DO YOU, CHET?... THE DAY MA DIED? WELL... I REMEMBER IT. I REMEMBER IT TO CLEARLY! I MADE A PROMISE, CHET! MA! I KEPT IT! THAT'S THE KIND OF GUY I AM! A PUSHOVER! YOU KNEW IT, TOO...

LEON! I...  
"REMEMBER THE BICYCLE, CHET? REMEMBER HOW YOU SAW IT IN THE WINDOW AND BEGGED ME FOR IT? YEARS! YOU KNEW I WAS A PUSHOVER! I DOO ALOT OF OVERTIME TO GET THAT BIKE FOR YOU! IT WAS THE BEST... IMPORTED FROM ENGLAND..."



LEON! THE BIKE! YOU BROUGHT IT FOR ME! OH, GOLLE, LEON! BEET YOUR BEST BROTHER IN THE WHOLE WORLD...



"REMEMBER THE BIKE, CHET? IT WAS A BIG THING TO YOU, BUT THE THRILL DIDN'T LAST LONG, DID IT? JERRY HODSON BOUGHT HIMSELF A SECOND-HAND CONVERTIBLE AND YOUR FAVORITE HUNG OUT..."

YOU MIGHT AS WELL HAVE STAYED HOME FROM SCHOOL THAT DAY... THE NEW YOU DREAMED ABOUT A JALOPY OF YOUR OWN, AND HAVING DATES, AND PARTIES. YOU WERE ALL SET FOR ME WHEN I CAME HOME FROM WORK THAT NIGHT, WEREN'T YOU? "

SAY, IT'S THE NUTS, JERRY! WHAT'S THIS JOY, WAGON SET YOU BACK?

TWO HUNDRED DUCKS! THAT'S A LOT OF MORE, CHET! CAN'T YOU MAKE THE BIKE DO FOR ANOTHER YEAR?

ONE-TWENTY... WITH NEW BEAR COVERS, CHET. I'M FELLOW YOU, THE CHICKS IN SCHOOL. SO NUTS OVER A JALOP. I JUST RAISE MY EYEBROWS AND IN THEY JUMP!

I SOLD THE BIKE, LEON... FOR TWENTY DUCKS!





**TWENTY DUCKS!**  
FOR PETE'S SAKE,  
CHET! I PAID SIXTY-  
TWO FIFTY FOR  
THAT RENT A COUPLE  
OF MONTHS AGO!

DID YOU EVER TRY TO SELL A  
SECOND HAND BIK? THAT'S  
ALL THEY'RE WORTH! THE  
TWENTY WILL GO TOWARDS  
A DOWN PAYMENT ON THE  
CAR, LEON. ALL THE GUYS  
AT SCHOOL ARE GETTING  
CARS...

"YEAH, YOU KNEW ME, CHET!" YOU KNEW I WAS A  
PUSHOVER! YOU KNEW I'D ASK A LITTLE, BUT THAT  
IT'S FINALLY GIVE IN. REMEMBER HOW SHOCKED I WAS AT  
THE PRICE OF THE CAR YOU'D PICKED OUT...



**FIVE  
HUNDRED  
DOLLARS!**  
BUT, CHET?  
YOU SAID...

LOOK AT IT THIS WAY,  
MR. DOYLE! A CAR LIKE  
THIS STANDS UP  
YOU SAVE ON  
REPAIRS...

IT'S TOO MUCH,  
LEON! I CAN THE  
DOWN PAYMENT  
BUT NO THOUGHT  
IT WAS THE PRICE

"THAT'S THE WAY I WAS, HUH, CHET? I ALWAYS  
ENDED UP SPENDING MORE BECAUSE YOU HAD TO  
HAVE THE BEST..."

IT WON'T BE TOO BAD  
FIFTEEN MONTHS TO PAY  
OFF THE BALANCE, LET'S  
SEE, THAT'S THREE HUNDRED  
DIVIDED BY FIFTEEN...  
PLUS INTEREST...

"I'LL GET A JOB  
AFTER SCHOOL,  
LEON. I'LL BUY  
THE CAR, AND  
YOU CAN USE  
THE CAR!"

"REMEMBER PUNK PROMISE, CHET? YOU NEVER DID KEEP IT,  
YOU NEVER DID FIND THAT AFTER-SCHOOL JOB - YOU NEVER  
EVEN LOOKED. AND I LEARNED THAT A CAR CAN BE AN  
EXPENSIVE PROPOSITION..."

"WHAT? BUT I JUST  
SAVE YOU THREE HUNDRED  
YESTERDAY!"

THAT WAS FOR GAS AND OIL!  
I CAN'T GO ON A DATE WITHOUT A  
CENT IN MY POCKET, CAN I?



"I CAN'T KEEP UP WITH  
YOU, CHET! NEW CLOTHES!  
FORES! SPECIAL HOB  
GAPST DATES! CAN'T..."

THANKS,  
LEON!  
I'LL SEE  
YOU IN  
THE  
MORNING!

CHET LISTENS UNCOMFORTABLY AS HIS  
BROTHER LEON'S VOICE DRONES ON...

THAT CAR MUST'VE COST ME  
A THOUSAND DOLLARS ALL  
TOLD BY THE TIME I  
PAID IT OFF. BUT IT  
WAS JUST THE TWO  
OF US THEN, AND IT  
DON'T MATTER  
THAT I WASN'T  
SAVING A DIME...

IT  
WAS  
8000  
WHEN  
THERE  
WERE  
ONLY  
TWO OF US...

IT DIDN'T MATTER TILL I  
MET CLAIRE F THREE  
YEARS AGO. IT WASN'T  
DOESN'T SEEM THAT  
LONG! YOU WERE AWAY  
AT COLLEGE, THEN  
YOU'D WANTED TO  
STUDY LAW...

I'LL  
DO  
BACH,  
LEON!  
I'LL...



LEON LOOKS AWAY FROM THE BATH-ROOM WITH ITS GOLD TILE FLOOR AND THE GOLD BODY LYING THERE. HE LOOKS AT HIS BROTHER, AND A SHADOW DARKENS HIS FACE...

GO BACK? WOULDN'T IT BE GREAT IF WE COULD ALL GO BACK, YOU AND CLARE AND ME?

LEON, I COULDN'T HELP WHAT HAPPENED!



"SHE WAS TWENTY THREE WHEN I MET HER... SIX YEARS YOUNGER THAN I. IF EVER THERE WERE TWO PEOPLE THAT WERE MADE FOR EACH OTHER, IT WAS CLARE AND ME..."

SO YOU CAN IMAGINE HOW GOOD I FELT WHEN I GOT THAT RAISE. IT MEANT CHET COULD GO TO COLLEGE.

HE MUST BE A WONDER-FUL BOY FOR YOU TO BE SO GOOD TO HIM!



'CLARE WAS LIKE THAT, CHET? NO MATTER WHAT SHE MAY HAVE THOUGHT, SHE NEVER ONCE SUGGESTED THAT I WAS SPOILING YOU...'

WELL, I'VE HAD TO BE BOTH FATHER AND MOTHER TO HER, CLARE. IF I DON'T SEE TO IT HE GOT A BREAK, WHO WOULD?

YOU'RE A WONDERFUL PERSON, LEON!



'CLARE WAS SATISFIED JUST WALKING WITH ME. SHE KNEW I COULDN'T AFFORD TO TAKE HER OUT, WITH YOU IN COLLEGE...'

IT WAS SOUND FUNNY FROM ABOUT MY AGE, BUT YOU'RE THE FIRST GIRL I'VE... ER... DONE WITH. GUESS I'VE BEEN TOO BUSY.

I ONLY WENT WITH ONE OTHER MAN, LEON. HE TRIED TO GET FRESH WITH ME SO I STOPPED SEEING HIM...



'CLARE WAS A GOOD GIRL, CHET. THAT'S THE WAY I WANTED HER TO STAY. REMEMBER WHEN YOU MET HER? YOU'D COME HOME FROM COLLEGE FOR THE SUMMER VACATION...'

WELL, IT'S ABOUT TIME? LEON... FINALLY... BUT HIMSELF A GIRL? WELL, IT'S ABOUT TIME.

CLARE IS MAKING SOMETHING SPECIAL TO CELEBRATE YOUR ANNIVERSARY, CHET? SHE CAN REALLY COOK? HA! YOU'LL SEE...



'WHILE CLARE WAS OUT IN THE KITCHEN, HE TOLD YOU ABOUT HER... HOW HE SAW EACH OTHER EVERY NIGHT... HOW SHE CAME TO THE HOUSE THREE OR THREE TIMES A WEEK TO COOK FOR ME. ONLY YOU... YOU STARTED IMAGINING THINGS...'

SO THAT'S HOW IT IS, CHET? IT IS, ISN'T IT? SAY, SHE IS A GOOD-LOOKING...

THAT'S NOT HOW IT IS AT ALL, CHET! SHE LOOKS? PERIOD? CLARE AND I ARE GOING TO BE MARRIED...



'BUT MY NERVS MADE NO DIFFERENCE TO YOU... TO YOUR ATTITUDE. THE NEXT NIGHT, WHEN I GOT HOME FROM WORK, THERE WAS A ROW I'VE SET IN THE LIVING ROOM...'

CHIFFES, I'VE BEEN SAYING FOR CLARE AND ME TO GET MARRIED? THAT BE'LL COST ME MORE THAN I'VE GOT IN THE BANK...

I WAS JUST THINKING OF YOU, LEON. BUT IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU FEEL ABOUT IT, SEND IT BACK!



LEON'S VOICE FADES AND HE IS  
SILENT FOR A MOMENT. CHET WATCHES  
HIM FACE BACK AND FORTH.

LEON STOPS BEFORE HIM, AND CHET  
CAN SEE THE ANGER MOUNTING IN  
HIS FACE...

LEON TURNS AND LOOKS AGAIN AT  
THE BODY ON THE GOLD HARD TILE  
FLOOR OF THE BATHROOM...

THAT T.V. SET WENT  
BYN! YOU WHEN YOU  
WENT BACK TO COLLEGE  
AND BEFORE I EVEN  
FINISHED PAYING FOR  
IT, YOU'D SOLD IT?

I NEEDED  
MONEY,  
LEON. I  
NEEDED IT  
SOON! I  
SHOOT! I

FOR SOME CHEAP  
DAME UP THERE!  
BECAUSE OF SOME  
CHEAP DAME, CLARE,  
AND I HAD TO PUT  
OFF GETTING MARRIED.

I KNOW!  
YOU'VE GOT  
PLENTY TO  
BE MAD ABOUT,  
LEON.

YOU ALWAYS NEEDED SOMETHING!  
AND I NEVER REFUSED! CLARE  
AND I WERE CONSTANTLY PUTTING  
OFF OUR MARRIAGE, FOR THREE  
YEARS I KEPT HER WAITING BECAUSE  
OF YOU! FOR THREE YEARS! THEN  
YOU CAME HOME FROM COLLEGE!  
QUIT!

"YOU HAD PLANS. HIS PLANS. YOU STARTED TALKING  
FAST, BUT I WAS THROUGH..."

SO THIS OTHER GUY AND I...  
WE SAT DOWN AND FIGURED  
OUT HOW IN A YEAR WE  
COULD PAY OFF A SERVICE  
STATION AND EVENTUALLY  
RUN IT INTO A CHAIN...

FINE, CHET? IF THAT'S  
WHAT YOU WANT, GO TO  
IT! BUT DON'T EXPECT  
ANY MORE HELP FROM  
ME. I'M FORGOTTEN WHEN  
THAT COLLEGE MONEY  
IS REPAYED, CLARE  
AND I ARE GOING TO...

"I DIDN'T HAVE TO FINISH" I COULD SEE IT IN YOUR  
FACE...

THE COLLEGE MONEY,  
CHET? WHERE IS IT?  
HAND IT OVER!

LOOK, LEON! I GOT IT BACK  
FROM THE BARBER WHEN I  
HAD THIS CHANCE FOR A  
REAL BUY...

IT WAS OUT THERE, PARKED AT THE CURB, ONE OF  
THOSE FANCY FOREIGN SPORT CARS.

YOU KNOW WHAT THAT JOB COST ME?  
LEON! SEVEN THOUSAND DOLLARS!  
THREE YEARS AGO! I GOT IT FOR  
TWO! THE EIGHT THOUSAND I GOT  
BACK FROM COLLEGE AND THE TWO  
THOUSAND THEY ALLOWED ME FOR  
THE OLD BEAP...

YOU, STILL  
OWE A  
THOUSAND  
DOLLARS  
ON IT...

"I TRIED TO SPEAK... TRIED TO GET MAD... BUT THE WORDS  
WOULDN'T COME OUT... AND THEN CLARE PUT HER HAND ON  
MY SHOULDER..."

IT'S ALL RIGHT, LEON!  
I'LL WAIT!

AND IF I LOAN MY OWN SERVICE  
STATION, LEON, REPAIRS AND  
GAS WON'T COST ME A CENT!  
RIGHT?



"SO CLAIRE AND I PUT OFF OUR WEDDING AGAIN, BUT IT WAS ALL JUST TALK. YOU NEVER DO ANYTHING ABOUT THAT SERVICE STATION, YOU WERE THE SAME OLD CHET, AND THAT EXPENSIVE CAR WAS EVERYTHING..."

"JUST THE DOWN PAYMENT FOR A RADIO, LEON. I'LL PAY OFF THE REST MYSELF WHEN I GET A JOB..."



"YOU NEVER LOOKED FOR A JOB..."

"MR. WILSON SAID I COULD BRING IT TO YOUR OFFICE TO SHOW YOU, LEON. IT'S ON SALE! TWELVE BUCKS! ISN'T IT THE SMALLEST WORM YOU EVER SAW? I'VE JUST GOT TO HAVE IT."



"AND I KEPT SHELLING OUT UNTIL CLAIRE PUT HER FOOT DOWN. THAT WAS LAST NIGHT WHEN YOU ASKED ME FOR ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS..."

"A STEPLING SILVER ROAD ORNAMENT FOR HIS CAR? NO, LEON! YOU GAVE HIM THE MONEY, AND I'M THROUGH WITH YOU!"

"THERE'S YOUR ANSWER, CHET!"



"YOU WERE STUNNED, WEREN'T YOU, CHET? IT WAS THE FIRST TIME I'D EVER REFUSED YOU ANYTHING! MAYBE THAT HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH WHAT HAPPENED THIS AFTERNOON. MARKE IT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED ANYHOW. YOU CAME HOME AND FOUND CLAIRE HERE... ALONE. AND YOU WANTED HER TOO..."

"I DON'T DRINK, CHET. NOW, CHET! STOP IT! STOP!"

"IF YOU WON'T HAVE A DRINK WITH ME, HOW'S ABOUT A LITTLE KISS?"



"SO YOU TOOK HER..."

"YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL, CLAIRE!"

"DON'T CHET! PLEASE DON'T! SLEEP... OR, CHET! NO."



"LATER, WHEN YOU LOOKED FOR HER, YOU COULDN'T FIND HER..."

"CLAIRE? CLAIRE, WHERE ARE YOU?"

"UNTIL YOU CAME TO THE BATHROOM AND SAW HER LYING ON THE COLD WHITE TILE FLOOR WITH THE TOILET STAINS AROUND HER MOUTH AND THE MEDICINE CABINET OPEN AND THE EMPTY SODINE BOTTLE IN THE SINK. YOU SAW HER ADOPTED TWISTED FACE AND KNEW THAT SHE WAS DEAD."



LEON STANDS OVER HIS YOUNGER BROTHER, AND THERE IS A FLAMING RAGE BURNING IN HIS EYES...



I GAVE YOU EVERYTHING, CHET! WHAT I DIDN'T GIVE, YOU TOOK!

... A RAGE THAT SEEMS TO BLAZE BRIGHTER AND WILDER...



NOT I DIDN'T GIVE YOU EVERYTHING, DID I? YOU WANTED A HOOD ORNAMENT FOR YOUR CAR!

LEON! I...

... WILDER AND MADDER EACH MINUTE...



I NEVER COULD REFUSE YOU, CHET! YOU'LL HAVE THAT ORNAMENT FOR YOUR CAR!

BEFORE LONG, LEON DOYLE IS TEARING ALONG THE HIGHWAY FEELING THE WARMTH OF CHET'S BODY BESIDE HIM, AND LEON IS LAUGHING A MANICAL KIND OF LAUGH.



I GAVE YOU EVERYTHING YOU WANTED, CHET! I EVEN GAVE YOU CLAIRES! AND NOW... EH... EH... YOU'VE GOT YOUR ORNAMENT? EH... EH! LIKE IT, CHET? LIKE IT?

BUT CHET'S BODY IS SILENT! HE DOESN'T ANSWER LEON'S QUESTION! HOW CAN HE...?



LIKE THE HOOD ORNAMENT, CHET? EH... EH... EH... EH...

FOR CHET'S EYES ARE CLOSED TO THE SIGHT OF THE ROAD FLYING AT HIM. HIS EARS ARE DEAF TO THE ROAR OF THE ENGINE. HE DOES NOT FEEL THE WIND RUSHING BY HIS HEAD WHERE LEON HAS FASTENED IT SECURELY TO THE HOOD...



EH... EH... EH... EH...

HEE...HEE! WELL, GEEPS! THAT'S THE YARN! DOESN'T THAT TOP 'EM ALL? ANYWAY, IT PUTS THE LAD ON C.K.'S PERVERTED PERIODICAL FOR THIS ISSUE! WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN THE RASHT OF HORROR, BY THE WAY! DID YOU HEAR DE ONE ABOUT DE HEADLESS BODY THAT GOT SQUO'D IN A BOTTLE OF POP BECAUSE... SET... DE CAR IT ARE! HEE...HEE! AND POP'LL EAT UP ALL THE CAR YOU GET FROM THE E.C. PAN-ADVENT CLUB.



SEE THE AD FOR THE DVD. DON'T FORGET! ENJOY YOURSELF! IF NO ONE ELSE DOES! 'BYE, NOW!



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Because we do not sell Mason Velvet-on shoes in stores, people must buy these TV-advertised shoes with the famous Good Housekeeping Seal **ONLY FROM YOU**—and keep buying from you! ★ Right now, during our Golden Anniversary year, is the perfect time to get started. Just send the coupon, and I'll rush your money, making **FREE** Starting Outfit. The Professional Sample Outfit pictured above is sent to qualified men without a penny's cost! Send today and start earning exciting cash profits **RIGHT AWAY!**



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**NO. 43**  
**SEPTEMBER**



**10¢**

# **TALES FROM THE CRYPT**

**FEATURING...**



**THE CRYPT-KEEPER**



**THE OLD WITCH**



**THE VAULT-KEEPER**



# ARE YOU A RED DUPE?

IN THE TOWN OF GAIOSKY IN THE HEART OF SOVIET RUSSIA, YOUNG MELVIN BUZUNKEN - SKOVITCHSKY PUBLISHED A COMIC MAGAZINE...



...SO THEY CAME AND SMASHED HIS FOUR-COLOR PRESS...



...AND HUNG POOR MELVIN THE NEXT MORNING!



- HERE IN AMERICA, WE CAN STILL PUBLISH COMIC MAGAZINES, NEWSPAPERS, SLICKS, BOOKS AND THE BIBLE. WE DON'T HAVE TO SEND THEM TO A CENSOR FIRST. NOT YET...
- FOR THERE ARE SOME PEOPLE IN AMERICA WHO WOULD LIKE TO CENSOR... WHO WOULD LIKE TO SUPPRESS COMICS. IT ISN'T THAT THEY DON'T LIKE COMICS FOR THEM! THEY DON'T LIKE THEM FOR YOU!
- THESE PEOPLE SAY THAT COMIC BOOKS AREN'T AS GOOD FOR CHILDREN AS NO COMIC BOOKS, OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT. SOME OF THESE PEOPLE ARE NO-GOODS. SOME ARE DO-GOODERS. SOME ARE WELL-MEANING. AND SOME ARE JUST PLAIN MEAN.
- BUT WE ARE CONCERNED WITH AN AMAZING REVELATION. AFTER MUCH SEARCHING OF NEWSPAPER FILES, WE'VE MADE AN ASTOUNDING DISCOVERY:

## THE GROUP MOST ANXIOUS TO DESTROY COMICS ARE THE COMMUNISTS!

- WE'RE SERIOUS! NO KIDDIN'! HERE! READ THIS:

THE COMMUNIST "DAILY WORKER" OF JULY 15, 1953 SAID THAT COMICS PLAY THE CONSCIOUS ROLE OF:

\*...BRUTALIZING AMERICAN YOUTH, THE BETTER TO PREPARE THEM FOR MILITARY SERVICE IN IMPLEMENTING OUR GOVERNMENT'S AIMS OF WORLD DOMINATION, AND TO ACCEPT THE ATROCITIES NOW BEING PERPETRATED BY AMERICAN SOLDIERS AND AIRMEN IN KOREA UNDER THE FLAG OF THE UNITED NATIONS.\*

THIS ARTICLE ALSO QUOTES GERSHON LEGMAN (WHO CLAIMS TO BE A GHOST WRITER FOR DR. FREDERICK WERTHAM, THE AUTHOR OF A RECENT BLAST AGAINST COMICS PUBLISHED IN "THE LADIES HOME JOURNAL"). THIS SAME G. LEGMAN, IN ISSUE #3 OF "NEUROLOGIA," PUBLISHED IN AUTUMN 1948, SAID:

\*THE CHILD'S NATURAL CHARACTER...MUST BE DISTORTED TO FIT CIVILIZATION...FANTASY VIOLENCE WILL PARALYZE HIS RESISTANCE, DIVERT HIS AGGRESSION TO UNREAL ENEMIES AND FRUSTRATIONS, AND IN THIS WAY PREVENT HIM FROM REBELLING AGAINST PARENTS AND TEACHERS. THIS WILL SIPHON OFF HIS RESISTANCE AGAINST SOCIETY, AND PREVENT REVOLUTION.\*

- SO THE NEXT TIME SOME JOKER GETS UP AT A P.T.A. MEETING, OR STARTS JABBERING ABOUT THE "NAUGHTY COMIC BOOKS" AT YOUR LOCAL CANDY STORE, GIVE HIM THE ONCE-OVER. WE'RE NOT SAYING HE IS A COMMUNIST! HE MAY BE INNOCENT OF THE WHOLE THING! HE MAY BE A DUPE! HE MAY NOT EVEN READ THE "DAILY WORKER"! IT'S JUST THAT HE'S SWALLOWED THE RED BAIT... HOOK, LINE, AND SINKER!

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# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HELLO! HI, LOW-LIFERS! YEP, IT'S YOUR LURID LIBRARIAN, THE CRYPT-KEEPER, READY TO OPEN ANOTHER SQUEAL-SESSION HERE IN THE CRYPT WITH ANOTHER OF MY FAVORITE TWISTED-TALES OF TORMENT AND TORTURE. SO, COME ON IN AND SIT DOWN ON THAT BLOOD-STAINED STONE MARKER THERE AND I'LL BEGIN THE YELP-YARN I CALL...

## FOUR-WAY SPLIT



ROY DIXON AWOKE WITH A START, KNOWING SOMETHING WAS WRONG. HE OPENED HIS PUZZLED EYES, LOOKED AROUND BLANKLY, . . . AND SCREAMED. WHERE WAS HE? WHAT WAS THIS COLD GREY STONE ROOM THAT BOXED HIM IN LIKE A TRAPPED ANIMAL? WHAT WAS THAT STEADY HISS, LIKE A THOUSAND VENOMOUS REPTILES? WHY WAS HE BOUND HELPLESSLY TO THIS IRON CHAIR? HE STRUGGLED FURIOUSLY, BUT THE ROPES ONLY BRUISED HIS FLESH. HIS THROAT WAS TORN RAW BY HIS WILD PLEADING SCREAMS THAT ONLY DEAFENED HIS OWN EARS. . .

PLEASE! HELP ME, SOMEBODY! LET ME OUT OF HERE! YA AAAAAHHHHH...



Jack Davis

BUT NOBODY CAME TO RELEASE ROY FROM HIS NIGHT-MARISH TRAP. AND HE SEEMED TO HEAR A GHOSTLY, HOLLOW-TONED VOICE ECHOING AND REVERBERATE THROUGH THE CHIN ROOM...

I SENTENCE YOU, ROY DICKSON, TO EXECUTION IN THE GAS CHAMBER FOR FIRST DEGREE MURDER...

8-GAS CHAMBER? NO! NO! LET ME OUT! THIS IS WRONG!



NOW THE WILDLY SCREAMING PRISONER COULD SEE... DIMLY... THE HOODED FIGURE PEERING IN AT HIM IMMEDIATELY THROUGH THE OBSERVATION WINDOW, REGULATING THE FLOW OF LETHAL GAS THAT ISSUED FROM THE GASED VENT IN THE FLOOR... HIS EXECUTIONER!

NO! IT CAN'T BE! THIS IS WRONG! NOT THE WAY I PLANNED IT AT ALL! YOU CAN'T DO THIS! IT'S A MISTAKE! PLEASE! OH, LORD... STOP HIM!



BUT THERE WAS NO ANSWER FROM THE HOODED WATCHER. ROY DICKSON'S BRAIN CLOUTERED NOW. HIS SENSES REELED CRAZILY AS THE DEADLY VAPORS WERE ABSORBED FROM HIS HEAVING LUNGS INTO HIS RACING BLOODSTREAM... HIS CHIN SAGGED... HIS HEAD LOOLED. HE WAS DYING...

THIS... IS ALL WRONG! IT... CAN'T BE... TRUE!



WAS IT A DREAM? A HOODED NIGHTMARE? IT MUST BE THAT! ROY CLUNG TO THAT REASSURING THOUGHT AS THE STONE ROOM SPUN AND PAGED BEFORE HIS BLINDING EYES. DREAMILY, HIS MEMORY REACHED BACK, BACK TO THE WAR, RED DAYS OF WORLD WAR II WHEN HE AND BUCK BOURMAN HAD BEEN AN FIVE SQUAD...

BOMBARDIER TO PILOT! TARGET'S DEAD AHEAD!

ROGER! PILOT! ROY COMPLETE! TO GET 'EM!



OF COURSE, THAT SORT OF THING HAD BEEN DURING OFF-DUTY HOURS. ON DUTY, IT WAS CAPTAIN BUCK BOURMAN, PILOT, AND SECOND LIEUTENANT ROY DICKSON, BOMBARDIER... AND NO MORE...

SHARE THE LEAD, OUT LIEUTENANT! THERE'S A WAR ON! REMEMBER?

BUCK! I... YES, SIR!



ONCE IN THE AIR, SLIDING HIS ROARING METAL MONSTER, PRESIDENT WITH COMEL, BUCK HAD ALWAYS BEEN ALL AHEAD RIGHT THROUGH TO HIS STEEL-SPRING BUNKER.

PILOT TO BOMBARDIER! THIS IS A PRIME TARGET TONIGHT! UNDERSTAND? DON'T MISS... OR YOU'LL NEVER SEE MY SHIP AGAIN.

Y-YES, SIR!



YET, THAT'D BEEN BUCK... PULLING PANTS, SHOWBOATING THE CREW, SLIDING IN HIS SILVER BARRED AUTHORITY. BUT NOW'S BUCKED IT IN 8000, MAKING BUCK BOURMAN AND FINE HELPLESSLY WHEN HIS CHANCE CAME... ON THE BOMBING RUN... WHEN HE WAS IN COMMAND.

TARGET SIGHTED? TAKING OVER, CAPTAIN! STEADY, NOW STEADY... OUT THAT SIDE-SLIP, HEAR ME? THAT'S AN ORDER, CAPTAIN!

Y-YES, LIEUTENANT!



BUT THEN, BETWEEN MISHMANS, THEY'D BEEN THROB AS THIEVES AGAIN... BUYING EACH OTHER DRINKS AND PLANNING THEIR FUTURE... AFTER THE WAR...

THINK OF IT, BOY... DUMP OWN AIRLINE, HAULING AIR FREIGHT... YOU AND ME... PARTNERS! ALL WE'D NEED IS ONE SURPLUS FOUR ENGINE JOB TO GET STARTED!

SOUNDS GREAT, BUDD! COUNT ME IN MY SHARE.

AND SO, ONE GLORIOUS POST-WAR MORNING, THEY'D STOOD PROUDLY BEFORE THEIR QUASIBUS HANGAR... BUSINESS PARTNERS...

THE BUCKEROY AIRLINES UNFOLDS ITS SILVER WINGS TA-TA-TA-TA!

CAN THE GLOWING, BOY? WE'VE GOT A MORTGAGE TO PAY OFF ON THAT OLD RECONSTITUTIONED B-BB! LET'S GET TO WORK...

FINALLY, AFTER WEEKS OF LEG-WORK, THEY'D LANDED THEIR FIRST CONTRACT... AND FLYING THEIR FIRST LOAD HAD BEEN JUST LIKE OLD TIMES... TOO MUCH LIKE OLD TIMES...

NO LOAFING, BOY! GET BACK AND CHECK THE GARGO!

STILL PULLIN' HANK, BUDD! THE WAR'S OVER, GUN! REMEMBER THAT! WITH PARTNERS!

ROY LIFTED HIS HEAD BROODER, THE PAIN FACED THE HIDING OF THE LETHAL GAS WAS GONE...

I'M ALIVE! THE GAS CHAMBER HAS VANISHED! IT WAS A DREAM! IT'S DARK NOW! I'M AWAKE! I KNOW THEY NEVER BROUGHT ME TO TRIAL... NEVER SENTENCED ME TO THE GAS CHAMBER, I KNOW! IT WAS ALL... A DREAM.



BUT WHAT WAS THIS? WHAT WAS THIS NEW TORTURE BOY WAS SUDDENLY AWARE OF? WHY WAS IT SO HARD TO BREATHE? WHAT WAS AROUND BOY'S NECK... SQUEEZING... SQUEEZING...

OH, LORD! I'M ON A SCAFFOLD! THIS IS A CHORE... HOOBBE AROUND MY NECK! I'M BEING KNUKE!

I SENTENCE YOU, BOY BAYON, TO BE HANGED BY THE NECK UNTIL DEAD!



THE NOOSE STEADILY TIGHTENED, CLAMPING HIS WINDPIPE SHUT FROM THE WRIGHT OF HIS BODY. SOMETIMES THE GHOSTLY THING HAPPENED... THE VICTIM'S NECK SQUEEZED BY THE DROPPING TRAP... LETTING HIM DIE A SLOW HORRIFYING DEATH BY STRANGULATION... DRAGGING HIM INTO A SUFFOCATING ETERNITY...



NO! NO! YOU CAN'T HANG ME! I ESCAPED THE LAW! THIS IS A DREAM, I'M SURE! ANOTHER HORRIBLE DREAM...

ROY'S MIND SANK INTO A DEEP DARK POOL AGAIN OUT OF WHICH PUFFED VISIONS OF THE PAST CAME ONCE MORE... REVIEWING HIS ASSOCIATION WITH BUCK BORDON... EVEN THOUGH THEIR AIRLINE'S EXPANDED THROUGH THE YEARS, UP INTO GOLDEN BRACKETS, BUCK'D KEPT IT UP, HATEFULLY, PULLING HANK...

CANCEL THIS PETERSON CONTRACT, BOY! IT'S NO GOOD! IT WON'T PAY!

IT IS GOOD! IT WILL PAY! NOW LISTEN, BUDD! ONCE AND FOR ALL, I'M NOT A Hired HAND ON THE PAYROLL! I'M AN EQUAL PARTNER! UNDERSTAND?





ROY REMEMBERED HOW HE'D WARNED HIS BUSINESS ASSOCIATE...

I NEGOTIATED THAT CONTRACT MYSELF, BUCK, AND I'M BACK AND I'M Tired OF YOUR BOLLERING ME. TRY IT ONCE MORE AND SO HELP ME, I'LL PULL OUT OF THIS PARTNERSHIP!

GO AHEAD, ROY! ANYTIME YOU WANT TO CALL IT QUITS IS GREAT WITH ME! IF YOU CAN'T PLAY BY MY WAY, JUST SAY THE WORD! SOMEBODY'S GOT TO BE BOSS HERE AND RUN THINGS RIGHT!



AND ROY REMEMBERED HOW HE'D FUNELED AND GAMBLER INWARDLY, FINALLY COMING TO THE STARK REALIZATION...

SO THAT'S HIS GAME! HE'S TRYING TO MAKE IT SO MISERABLE FOR ME, I'LL PULL OUT AND LEAVE HIM TO RUN THE WHOLE ROMANIA!



WELL... THIS GAME CAN BE PLAYED BOTH WAYS! OF COURSE! WHY NOT? WHY NOT HIM? IF I CAN GET HIM TO PULL OUT... TURN THE TABLES... THE WHOLE DEAL WOULD BE MINE! BUT HOW? HOW COULD I GET RID OF HIM? I'VE GOT TO THINK OF A WAY...



AND SO, HIS ULTIMATE HATRED FOR HIS PARTNER HAD RAZED LIKE CAUSTIC INTO ROY'S SOUL AND HE'D ELIMINATED ALL WAYS TO HIS SUCCESSFUL AIRLINES OF BUCK HORDON... ALL WAYS, THAT IS, EXCEPT ONE...

MURDER! I'VE GOT TO KILL HIM! IT'S THE ONLY WAY!



ROY REMEMBERED HOW HE'D STUDIED THE WALL MAP AND DECIDED...

THEY SAY THAT "MURDER WILL OUT"! A MURDER CAN NEVER STAY CONCEALED! SO... I WON'T CONCEAL IT! I'LL PLAN IT STRAIGHT OUT IN THE OPEN! AND HERE'S WHERE THE LAW WOULD I DO FOR THE FIRM PLUS MY WARTIME TRAINING PAYS OFF!



ROY'D ALWAYS HANDED THE "DIRTY WORK" FOR THE AIRLINE... THE LAW CASES THAT HAD COME UP FROM TIME TO TIME... HE'D EVEN TAKEN LAW COURSES AT NIGHT TO HELP... NOW, HIS LAW WORK WOULD HELP HIM TO COMMIT MURDER, AND GET AWAY WITH IT!

THESE FOUR STATES, UTAH, ARIZONA, NEW MEXICO, AND COLORADO, ALL COME TOGETHER... HERE, AT ONE COMMON POINT AND THAT'S IT! A FOUR STATE WHORL! OVER ONE CERTAIN MURDER!



AND SO ROY'D PREPARED AND WAITED... AND HIS OPPORTUNITY'S CAME ONE NIGHT, WHEN THE OFFICE HELP HAD COME HOME AND BUCK WAS WORKING LATE, SETTING A NIGHT AIR FREIGHT SHIPMENT CHECKED OUT...

WHY'S THERE? OH, IT'S YOU, ROY? I THOUGHT YOU WENT HOME WITH THE OTHERS. WELL, SCRAM... I'M BUSY!

STILL, THE BOSS, EH, BUCK? STILL THE CAPTAIN ORDERING AROUND HIS CREW? WELL, MY DEAR BOSS CAPTAIN...



ROY REMEMBERED HOW HE'D RAISED THE MONEY WRENCH...BRINGING IT DOWN ACROSS BUCK'S HEAD CAREFULLY...EASY...NOT TOO HARD...NOT HARD ENOUGH TO KILL HIM...NOT YET.



...THAT WAS YOUR LAST ORDER! YOU'RE GOING TO TAKE A LITTLE TRIP...

GNAAAAH

OUT INTO THE DARKNESS, ROY'D CARRIED BUCK'S UNCONSCIOUS FORM...INTO THE REAR DOOR OF THE HANGAR...TO THE SURPLUS B-29 THEY STILL USED FOR SHORT FREIGHT HAULS...SHORT NIGHT HAULS...LIKE THE ONE TONIGHT.



ALL LOADED UP...READY TO GO NOW! I'LL CHECK THE CARGO HOLD NOW! ALL I HAVE TO DO IS SHIFT A FEW CRATES...AND I'M SET...

IT'D BEEN SO EASY...TYPING BUCK UP, SAGGING HIM IN CASE HE'D COME TO, AND ST RINGING HIM UP ONTO THE OLD BOMB RACKS...



...THEN STOWING THE OTHER ITEM, THE ITEM ROY'D BOUGHT AND RECONDITIONED PAINFULLY...THE JUMP-PLUS BOMBING...INTO THE CLUTTERED NOSE OF THE OLD SUPERFORT...



AND WAITING AROUND TILL THE GROUND CREW'S TRUNDLED THE OLD LADY OUT ONTO THE FIELD AND NAMED UP HER ENGINES, IT'D BEEN SO EASY TO BUMP INTO BATSON, THE PILOT.



SORTA BRINGS BACK OLD MEMORIES, THAT BARY! YOU KNOW, BATSON! I'D LIKE TO COME ALONG FOR A RIDE TONIGHT! DEAL WITH ROY?

WHY, UH... SURE, FINE, MR. DECK! YOU'RE THE BOSS!

AND AS THEY SCARED WEST, IT'D BEEN SO EASY FOR ROY TO PRETEND A WAR HERO'S NOSTALGIA...



YOU KNOW, BATSON! IT'S JUST COME OVER ME! I'D LIKE TO MAKE LIKE A BOMBARDIER AGAIN...FOR OLD TIME'S SAKE. I'M GOING FORWARD INTO THE NOSE. FOLLOW MY ORDERS ON THE INTERCOM. JUST LIKE YOU'RE MY PILOT AND WE'RE HEADED OVER BERLIN! AND STOP GRINNING!

I'M... I'M NOT GRINNING, MR. DECK! I UNDERSTAND!

IT'D BEEN SO EASY TO UNCOVER THE BOMB-SIGHT AND PLUG IN THE LEADS HE'D WORKED ON FOR WEEKS...THE LEADS THAT CONTROLLED THE ALERONS...THE ELEVATORS...THE RUDDER...THE BOMB-DAYS...AND THE BOMB-RACKS...THE BOMB RUN!



ALL RIGHT, BATSON! LET'S HEAD HER AROUND TO A BEADING OF THREE DEGREES SOUTH BY WEST...

BUT THAT'S OFF OUR COURSE, MR. DECK!

NOT HER! MOODY OFF, BATSON. JUST PLAY ALONG AND REMOON YOUR BOSS, HUNT!

OKAY, MR. BATSON! IT'S FOUR SAS!

THE PROUD OLD GAI HAD TURNED SOUTHWEST AND ROY'D LET GRIM AND THUNT-LIFFED... MORE TENSE THAN HE'D EVER BEEN ON ANY MISSION OVER GERMANY. AND HE'D PLAYED IT LIKE A GAME...

BOMBARDIER TO PILOT! TAKE HER DOWN TO 1000 FEET. HEADING 2 DEGREES, SOUTH BY SOUTHWEST.

YES, SIR!

BUT IT'D BEEN NO IDLE GAME FOR ROY. IT'D BEEN A GAME OF DEATH AND THE STAKES WERE HIGH. THIS HAD TO BE "ON TARGET" "DIRECT HIT"... ON THE MOON! BUT HE'D TIMED IT PERFECTLY! THE MOON HAD ILLUMINATED EVERYTHING BELOW.

TARGET SIGHTED! I'LL PUT, TAKE OVER, BATSON. BATSON LET GO OF THE CONTROLS!

THE BOMB BAY'S HAD OPENED. SUCK'D LOCKED DOWN AND TRIED TO SCREAM BUT THE GAS HAD HELD. FINE CROSS Hairs HAD MOVED SLOWLY TOGETHER, AND THEN...

BOMB AWAY!

DOWN AND DOWN, THE BOMB BOMB WAS HURTLING.

AND THE MEMORY FAGED AS THE CONSTRUCTION AROUND ROY'S THROAT EASED AND AIR RUSHED INTO HIS LUNGS IN GREAT SCORING GULPS...

I... I'M ALIVE AGAIN! I'M NOT DREAMING ANYMORE! THE MOON IS GONE! I... I WAS DREAMING AGAIN.

SUDDENLY, THERE WAS DARKNESS AGAIN FOR ROY.

NOW, WHAT'S HAPPENING? WHAT'S THIS MOOD DROPPING OVER MY HEAD? WHY AM I BEING PUSHED DOWN INTO THIS CHAIR? WHY ARE THEY STRAPPING ME IN IT? WHAT... WHAT... OH, LORD!

AND ONCE AGAIN HE HEARD THE SAME HOODED EXECUTIONER'S VOICE AS THE SWITCH WAS THROWN.

I SENTENCE YOU, ROY BIXON, TO DEATH BY ELECTROCUTION!

NO! OH, GOD! NO! IT'S THE ELECTRIC CHAIR!

THE FIRST JOLT RIPPED INTO ROY ORDIN LIKE A MILLION WHITE-HOT NEEDLES... BOILING HIS BLOOD. HE COULD SMELL HIS OWN FLESH FIRING. THE SECOND JOLT SPIRALED HIM INTO A BLUE-WHITE FLASHING MYST THAT CHANGED INTO A PICTURE OF THE PAST... OF BUCK JORDON'S BODY CRASHING TO EARTH DIRECTLY UPON A LARGE FLAT STONE MARKER...

RIGHT ON TARGET...

YES, IT HAD BEEN 'RIGHT ON TARGET'. ROY'S PIN-POINT BOMBING HAD DROPPED BUCK JORDON ON THE STONE MARKER THAT DELINEATES THE COMMON CORNERS OF UTAH, COLORADO, ARIZONA, AND NEW MEXICO... STAINING IT RED WITH BLOOD AND RUPTURED FLESH...



IT HAD ALL GONE ACCORDING TO PLAN. ROY'D OPENLY AND BOLDLY PLEADED GUILTY TO THE GRAND JURY'S INDICTMENT. BUT THEN THE FUN HAD STARTED AS THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COURTS OF FOUR STATES WRANGLED LIKE ALLEY-CATS OVER ONE MOUSE...

UTAH CLAIMS JURISDICTION IN THIS MURDER CASE

ARIZONA CLAIMS THE RIGHT TO TRY THE PRISONER

NEW MEXICO

COLORADO!

A LEGAL BRAWL HAD DEVELOPED. BUCK JORDON HAD MET HIS DEATH AT THE FOUR MUTUAL CORNERS OF THESE STATES. EACH ONE DEMANDED ITS RIGHT TO PROSECUTE, CLAIMING SOLE JURISDICTION. ROY'D BEEN ABLE TO HAVE HIMSELF RELEASED ON \$50,000 BAIL, VIA A WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS...

THEY'LL DRAG THROUGH COURT AFTER COURT. AT ANY DECISION TO TRY ME... I'LL APPEAL! THIS WILL GO ON FOR YEARS! I CAN APPEAL RIGHT UP TO THE SUPREME COURT!



AND ROY'D BEEN RIGHT? HIS PLAN HAD WORKED EXACTLY AS HE'D PREDICTED IT WOULD. RED TAPE HAD PILED UP, TANGLING INTO A THICKER AND MORE COMPLICATED KNOT.

FOUR STATES... BICKERING... EACH STUBBORN... JEALOUS... PRONTO! THEY'LL NEVER BRING ME TO TRIAL... AT LEAST NOT IN MY LIFETIME!



THE MEMORY FADDES, THE PAINFUL JOLTS OF ELECTRICITY WERE GONE. ROY LOOKED AROUND. IT WAS DAWN NOW... DAWN OVER A DESERT WASTELAND.

I... I'M SHAKE AGAIN? I HASN'T ELECTROCUTED! OH, GOD! WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME? WHY AM I BEING TORTURED LIKE THIS? LIFE... NO! WHAT AM I DOING HERE?



ROY LOOKED DOWN. HE WAS STANDING ON A FLAT ROCK. A MARKER. A FAMILIAR MARKER.



THE HOODED FIGURE SWEEP HIS ARM. YOU ESCAPED THE SCOFFOLD OF THAT STATE... SO I LET YOU TRY THAT ONE TOO...



THE HOODED FIGURE STOOD BESIDE THE MARKER.



THE HOODED FIGURE POINTED TO THE GREY WALLED STRUCTURE WITH THE LITTLE OBSERVATION WINDOW.



...IN A CIRCLE...POINTING...



...POINTING TO THE LONG SHADOWS ON THE SAUNY DESERT SAND...



BUT THE EXECUTIONER REMOVED HIS HOOD...AND ROY SAW THAT THIS WAS NO DREAM...



HEH, HEH! SO POOR OLD ROY GOT IT FROM BUCK... FOUR DAYS! WELL, YOU'VE GOT IT FROM E.C. FOUR DAYS WHEN YOU READ ONE OF YOUR GHOUL-LUNATIC'S MASS: FOUR CHILLING SCREAM-STORIES. NEXT COMES E.C. WITH HIS... THEN I'LL BE BACK TO RE-REVOLT YOU, AND E.C. WILL COMPLETE THE CREEPY QUARTET. SO READ ON



# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HELLO! HERE'S A HORRIBLE 'HY' TO ALL YOU HORROR-HAPPY HYDISTS! WELCOME NOW TO THE VAULT OF HORROR. THIS IS YOUR NARRATOR OF NAUSEATING NOVELTIES, THE VAULT-KEEPER, READY TO READ ANOTHER REVOLTING RECREATION FROM MY LIBRARY OF LECHEMIOUS LITERATURE. THIS TERROR-TONE, THIS CHANCE CHUMP OF CHILLING CHARNEL CHAPTER IS APTLY ENTITLED...

## COLD WAR

THERE WAS A BITING FROST IN THE LATE NOVEMBER NIGHT AIR WHICH MOVERED ABOUT THE LAST REMAINING FALL FLOWERS, BISTONING IDY KISSES OF DEATH UPON THEIR SHIVERING PETALS. THE LEAVES HAD LONG SINCE LEFT THE TREES, AND IN THEIR UNRAILED TRUNKS TO THE COMING WINTER WINDS, UNCOVERING BRANCHES THAT REACHED SKYWARD LIKE TWISTED AND WITHERED SOUT-WRACKED FINGERS. THERE, IN THAT GARDEN OF GLOOM, SAT THE WIFE AND THE LOVER, AND ON THE GREY COLD FLAGSTONE TERRACE STOOD THE HUSBAND, WATCHING... AND WAITING.



YOUR ARMS ARE LIKE ICE, MARIA. LET ME SET YOU YOUR WARM, MY DARLING...

PLEASE, NORMAN. DO THAT! I AM... IT COOLD!



THE MOMENT NORMAN KING HAD MET MARIA HOLT AT THE PARTY GOING ON WITHIN THE HOUSE BEYOND, HE'D FALLEN IN LOVE WITH HER. HE'D WAITED TILL SHE WAS ALONE... THEN COAXED HER INTO THE GARDEN, BRAZENLY PLAUNTING HIS ATTENTIONS UPON HER IN FRONT OF HER STONE-FACED HUSBAND. NOW, AS NORMAN PASSED PAUL HOLT, HE NOTICED HIS CYNICAL SMILE...

YOU'RE WASTING YOUR TIME, MY FRIEND. MARIA WILL AMUSE HERSELF WITH YOU... AND SAVE HER LOVE FOR ME!

YOU'RE PRETTY SOME OF YOURSELF, HOLT! WELL, WE'LL SEE!



NORMAN HAD NOTICED THE COLO AND IMPASSIVE IMPOS-  
SIBLE THAT HAD SEEMED TO BLANKET MARIA AND PAUL  
AND HE'D ASSUMED THAT THE PASSION FIRES HAD  
COOLED FOR THEM. SO HE'S SET HIS SIGHTS UPON THE  
POOR UNHAPPY WIFE, DETERMINED TO STIR UP THE FLAMES  
WITHIN HER ONCE AGAIN... FOR HIM, HE GOT MORE  
THAN MARIA'S WRAP FROM THE CLOAKROOM...



HE FINISHED THE DRUG-NOMED BLUE-BLACK 38 AUTO-  
MATIC HE'D TAKEN FROM HIS OVERCOAT, AND IT GAVE HIM  
CONFIDENCE...



I ALWAYS GET WHAT I WANT ONE WAY  
OR ANOTHER. AND I'VE NEVER WANTED  
ANYTHING OR ANYBODY THE WAY I WANT  
MARIA HOLT!

WHEN NORMAN RETURNED TO THE GARDEN, PAUL WAS  
GONE...

NOW'S OUR CHANCE, MARIA.  
LET'S GO SOMEPLACE...  
ANYPLACE... JUST SO LONG  
AS IT'S AWAY FROM HERE!  
I WANT TO BE ALONE WITH  
YOU.

OH... I COULDN'T.  
NORMAN: PAUL WOULD  
WORRY! BESIDES,  
WE ARE ALONE  
OUT HERE, AREN'T  
WE?



NORMAN TOOK MARIA IN HIS ARMS... TRIED TO KISS HER...

DON'T TAUNT ME, MARIA. YOU  
KNOW WHAT I MEAN. I'M  
MADLY, HELPLESSLY IN LOVE  
WITH YOU!

PLEASE NORMAN  
DON'T PLEASE...  
YOU KNOW I'M  
MARRIED...



I HAVE EYES, MARIA! I  
CAN SEE YOUR HUSBAND  
AND YOU ARE LIKE TWO  
STONES! THE LOVE  
THAT WAS ONCE BETWEEN  
YOU IS DEAD! WHAT IF YOU  
WEREN'T MARRIED?...  
IF YOU HAD NO HUS-  
BAND? COULDN'T YOU  
CARE FOR ME?

WHAT'S  
THE USE  
IN SUS-  
PICION,  
NORMAN?  
I DO  
HAVE A  
HUSBAND.



SUDDENLY MARIA TURNED AND RAN  
TOWARDS THE HOUSE...

... AND THERE'S  
NOTHING WE  
CAN DO ABOUT IT!

MARIA!  
COME  
BACK!



MARIA DISAPPEARED THROUGH THE  
FRENCH DOORS AS PAUL HOLT'S  
JEERING LAUGHTER RANG OUT FROM  
THE FAR END OF THE GARDEN...

YES, MR. KING!  
THERE'S NOTHING  
YOU CAN DO ABOUT  
IT...

WHY YOU DIRT,  
SNEAKING... YOU  
WERE ALWAYS  
THERE IN THE  
SHADOWS ALL  
THIS TIME...  
LISTENING!



NORMAN'S HAND WENT TO THE LOADED AUTOMATIC IN HIS POCKET AS THE SNEERING HUSBAND APPROACHED, AND HIS FACE FLUSHED RED WITH HATE AND ANGER AT THE AMUSED TWINKLE IN PAUL'S EYES...

DO YOU COULDN'T CRAWL HER ARMS, KING? WHAT A PITY!

SHE SAID THERE WAS NO USE SUPPOSING, HOLT! SHE SAID THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD DO ABOUT YOU! WELL, THERE IS!



NORMAN WHIPPED OUT THE GUN, PRESSING THE COLD BLACK SNOW-NOSED MUZZLE AGAINST PAUL HOLT'S CHEST. THE SNEERING SMILE VANISHED FROM PAUL'S FACE...

THERE'S THIS I CAN DO! I CAN KILL YOU!

DON'T BE A FOOL, KING! BEFORE YOU PULL THAT TRIGGER, LET ME TELL YOU WHY IT WON'T DO YOU ANY GOOD!



YOU'RE TRYING TO SCARE ME! TELL SOMEONE SEES US, HOLT, WELL, IT WON'T WORK!

NOBODY WILL COME OUT IN THIS COLD, KING! I MERELY WANT TO TELL YOU ABOUT MARIA... AND ME... AND OUR ROMANCE. NOW IT BEGAN... EVERYTHING! BUT...



PAUL HOLT'S EYES NARROWED...

BUT, IF YOU'RE DETERMINED TO SHOOT, SO AHEAD!

ALL RIGHT! START TALKING, HOLT! BUT MAKE IT QUICK!



CURIOSITY HAD GOTTEN THE BETTER OF NORMAN. HE RELAXED A BIT AS PAUL BEGAN HIS STORY, BUT HE KEPT THE GUN MUZZLE LEVELLED AGAINST PAUL'S CHEST...

IT'S A STRANGE AND FRIGHTENING STORY, NORMAN! IT BEGAN WHEN I FIRST SAW MARIA. IT WAS A LITTLE MORE THAN A YEAR AGO. SHE WAS SURROUNDED BY SKELETONS AND VAMPIRES AND WERE WOLVES.

SKELETONS? VAMPIRES? WHAT IN BLAZES ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?



"YOU SEE, I'D SOME TO VISIT SOME RICH FRIENDS IN PORT-AU-PRINCE, HAITI. THEY'D TAKEN ME TO A HALLOWE'EN MASQUERADE PARTY. MARIA WAS MADE UP AS A LITTLE SERIOUS RED DEVIL. I CAME AS A SCARCEON. I WAS ATTRACTED TO HER THE MINUTE I SAW HER..."

NO PAIR LIFTING MY MASK TILL AFTER MIDNIGHT!

BUT I'VE GOT TO SEE IF THE FACE MATCHES THE FIGURE...



"AT MIDNIGHT, MARIA UNMASKED AND I UNMASKED AND WE LOOKED AT EACH OTHER AND KNEW. WE KNEW WHAT ANTHONY AND CLEOPATRA, AND ROMEO AND JULIET, AND ALL THE OTHER LOVERS DOWN THROUGH THE AGES KNEW..."

MARIA!

PAUL!





"I TOOK HER BY THE HAND AND PULLED HER AFTER ME THROUGH THE SWIRLING CROWD OF MERRY WOMEN. SHE LAUGHED AND IT WAS LIKE THE TINKLING OF SILVER BELLS..."

PAUL...WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME? STOP...

I'M GETTING YOU OUT OF HERE BEFORE ONE OF THESE SHOULD BEATS ME TO IT!

"OUTSIDE, MARIA STOPPED, SHYERING... I LOOKED AT HER AND SHE WASN'T LAUGHING ANY MORE. FEAR LURKED IN HER EYES..."

DON'T TALK ABOUT SHOULD, PAUL! I... I DON'T LIKE THEM. I... I'M AFRAID!

HURT I... I'M SORRY, HONEY! I DIDN'T MEAN... I WOULDN'T... WELL, I'LL NEVER MENTION THEM AGAIN!

"I TOOK HER IN MY ARMS AND TRIED TO KISS HER RIGHT THEN AND THERE, AS YOU JUST DID, NORMAN. BUT, AS WITH YOU, SHE'D HAVE NONE OF IT..."

DON'T SAY NO, MARIA. THAT'S WHAT OUR LIPS WERE MADE FOR...

NOT MINE, PAUL! NOT YET! WE... WE DON'T KNOW EACH OTHER...

I'M PAUL HOYT, AND YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL AND NOW THAT WE KNOW EACH OTHER

IF YOU INSIST ON TRYING TO KISS

ME, PAUL, I'LL GO BACK INSIDE AND YOU'LL NEVER SEE ME AGAIN!

"SO I DIDN'T TRY. I COULDN'T, ALTHOUGH IT WASN'T EASY. THE NEXT EVENING, I TOOK HER TO DINNER. I TRIED TO HOLD HER HAND ACROSS THE TABLE, BUT SHE PULLED IT AWAY BEFORE I COULD TOUCH IT..."

NOT EVEN THAT, MARIA?

IT WOULD BE WORTH TRYING WITH HOLDING MY HAND... AND THEN A KISS... ANOTHER...

IF YOU'RE PLAYING HARD-TO-GET, IT'S BORING, MARIA. YOU'RE OWING ME MAD!

IF YOU'RE IMPATIENT, PAUL... THERE ARE OTHER GIRLS... MUCH EASIER-TO-KISS GIRLS. PERHAPS YOU'D BETTER FORGET ABOUT ME!

I'M NOT GOING TO FORGET ABOUT YOU, MARIA! I COULDN'T! I WANT YOU! I WANT YOU TO MARRY ME! THERE! I'VE SAID IT! MARRY ME, MARIA!

OH, PAUL! YEAH, YEAH, I'LL MARRY YOU... IT... IF MY MOTHER AND FATHER GIVE US PERMISSION! YOU'LL HAVE TO ASK THEM...



"MARIA AND HER PARENTS LIVED IN A LARGE OLD HOUSE OUTSIDE PORT-AU-PRINCE, WHEN I WENT TO SEE THEM THAT NIGHT, THEY SAT STIFFLY ACROSS A DRAWING ROOM THAT MUST HAVE BEEN FURNISHED IN 1880. THEIR ATTIRE FITTED THE SURROUNDINGS."

"I'VE COME TO ASK FOR YOUR PERMISSION TO MARRY YOUR DAUGHTER, MR. AND MRS. HARMON."

"INDEED? AND PRECISELY WHAT ARE YOUR QUALIFICATIONS, MR. HOLT?"

"MY QUALIFICATIONS? I HAD TO CONTROL MYSELF TO KEEP A STRAIGHT FACE. YOU'D THINK I WAS APPLYING FOR A POSITION INSTEAD OF ASKING TO MARRY THEIR DAUGHTER."

"WELL, I HAVE. GUT A BIT OF MONEY, SEE. A GOOD EDUCATION. MY OWN BUSINESS..."

"FINE, MR. HOLT, BUT MORE IMPORTANT: WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO DIE FOR MY DAUGHTER?"



"EVER HIS IDEAS OF GALLANTRY WERE VICTORIAN, I SUPPRESSED MY AMUSEMENT AND GAVE THE ANSWER HE WAS LOOKING FOR."

"I'D GIVE MY LIFE FOR MARIA WITH— OUT A MOMENT'S HESITATION, SIR!"

"AND THEN YOU HAVE OUR PERMISSION, YOUNG MAN?"

"OH, PAUL, I'M SO HAPPY!"

"TO MY SURPRISE, MR. HARMON SAID HE COULD BE MARRIED THE VERY NEXT DAY, SO MARIA AND I WERE WED IN THAT COLD BLEAR CHURCH BY A LOCAL OFFICIAL."

"I NOW PRODUCE YOU MAN AND WIFE!"

"NOW YOU MAY KISS YOUR BRIDE, SON!"

"MR. HARMON SMILED, BUT MARIA PERMITTED ME TO DO NO MORE THAN BRUSH HER COLO LIPS WITH MINE. I BLAMED IT ON SHYNESS BEFORE HER PARENTS. I AGOED TO CRASH HER IN MY ARM."



"WHEN THE OFFICIAL THAT HAD MARRIED US HAD GONE, MARIA TURNED TO HER FATHER. MR. HARMON TOOK A SMALL SILVER CASE FROM HIS WAISTCOAT POCKET AND REMOVED A SINGLE WHITE TABLET."

"GIVE IT TO ME, YOUNG MAN, I'M PATIENT!"

"HERE, YOUNG MAN! SWALLOW THIS!"

"WHAT IS IT? IT SMELLS FUNNY! MEDICINAL?"

"MARIA LOOKED AT ME REASSURINGLY, AND WHISPERED..."

"SWALLOW IT, PAUL. DARLING! IT'S ALL RIGHT! IT'S STYFOCHNINE!"

"STYFOCHNINE? YOU SAID MR. THAT'S POISON! WHAT'S THE IDEA?"

"YOU SAID YOU'D DIE FOR MY DAUGHTER, PAUL!"



"I DROPPED THE DEADLY LETHAL TABLET AND BACKED OFF. MARIA KNELT AND PICKED IT UP AND TRIED TO GIVE IT BACK TO ME. SHE PRESSED HER HAND IN MINE. HER FLESH WAS COLD... **GOLD AS DEATH...**"

"YOU SAID YOU'D DIE FOR ME, PAUL DEAR... (CHORE!) NOW YOU'VE GOT TO! OUR MARRIAGE CAN NEVER BE CONSUMMATED UNLESS YOU'VE LIVED I AM... LIKE MOTHER AND FATHER... **UNLESS YOU'RE DEAD!**"



"A GLAMMY CHILL CREEPT ACROSS ME LIKE AN INVISIBLE HAND OF HOARFROST. NUMBLY, I MOVED BACKWARDS. THERE WAS A LOOK OF DEADLY GRIM DETERMINATION ON THE FACES OF THE HARBINGERS AS THEY CAME SLOWLY AFTER ME."

"THAT'S WHY I NEVER LET YOU TOUCH ME OR KISS ME, PAUL! YOU'D HAVE FELT MY DEAD FLESH! TAKE THE PILL SO YOU CAN BECOME ONE OF US! I LOVE YOU! I WANT YOU!"

"NO! FOL, LORD, NO!"



"I SCREAMED AND BROKE FOR THE DOOR..."

"**ZOMBIES! I'VE MARRIED INTO A FAMILY OF ZOMBIES!**"



"THE DOOR WAS LOCKED... THE KEY GONE. I WHIRLED, CONFUSED. MY ONLY AVENUE OF ESCAPE WAS UP THE STAIRS..."

"PAUL! I LOVE YOU! I'VE GOT TO HAVE YOU! YOU'VE GOT TO DIE FOR ME TO HAVE YOU!"

"NO! NO!"



"THE DOORS ON THE SECOND FLOOR WERE ALL LOCKED TOO. FOR A MOMENT, THEY TRAPPED ME THERE. THEIR COLD LIFELESS HANDS HOLDING ME IN A STEEL GRIP. BUT WITH A STRENGTH BORN OF SILENT TERROR, I WRENCHED FREE."

"PLEASE, PAUL! PLEASE!"

"OH, LORD..."



"THERE WAS NO TIME TO THINK... ONLY TO RUN. I SAW THE NARROW STAIRWAY LEADING UPWARD AND WITH A WILD FRANTIC SCRAMBLE, I STUMBLED UP INTO A MUSTY DUST-LADEN FOUL-SMELLING ATTIC. I REACHED THE ONE WINDOW IN THE JUNK-DRAWN ROOM, THREW IT OPEN, AND STARED DOWN THREE STORIES TO A BRICK PATIO. I BALANCED BACK AS I CLIMBED TO THE SILL AND SAW MY ZOMBIE WIFE AND IN-LAWS THROUGH A HAZE OF COBWEBS, COMING FOR ME... COMING... AND I HEARD MARIA'S PLEADING VOICE..."

"DON'T JUMP, PAUL! DON'T! YOU'LL CRUSH YOUR BODY... BREAK BONES... TEAR FLESH! I WOULDN'T WANT YOU DEAD THAT WAY..."



NORMAN KING LISTENED IN AMAZEMENT TO THIS TALE OF TERROR THAT POUROD FROM THE LIPS OF THE HUSBAND OF THE WOMAN HE WANTED SO DESPERATELY. HE LOOKED DOWN AT THE GUN IN HIS HAND, THE GUN LEV- ELED AT PAUL HOLT'S CHEST...

"I GUESS... I GUESS I LEFT THEM GASPING AND! WHAT HAPPENED? MARIA TALKED SENSE! IT WAS NO USE JUMP- ING! ONE WAY OR THE OTHER..."



PAUL HOLT SPINNED WHIRLY...

"WHAT HAPPENED? WHY THEY KILLED ME, OF COURSE!"

"THEY KILLED..."



SUDDENLY NORMAN HEARD PAUL'S MOKING LAUGHTER, SAW THE GLINT OF AMUSEMENT IN HIS EYES, AND NORMAN'S FACE FLUSHED SCARLET. HE SEETHED WITH RAGE, HIS FINGER TIGHTENED ON THE TRIGGER...

"DO YOU THINK I'M A FOOL, HOLT? DO YOU THINK I'D BELIEVE THAT BOLT?"

"BELIEVE WHAT YOU LIKE, NORMAN!"



NORMAN SCREAMED IN FURY, HE SQUEEZED THE TRIGGER AGAIN AND AGAIN AS HE SHRIEKED...

"I SAID I'D KILL YOU! AND I MEANT IT! TAKE THAT... AND THAT... AND THAT... AND SHOO..."



THE AUTOMATIC BARRAGED INTO THE NIGHT, FOUR UGLY BLACK HOLES APPEARED IN PAUL'S CHEST. THEY GAYED DRYLY... BURNED BY THE POWDER AT SUCH CLOSE RANGE. BUT THERE WAS NO BLOODY! NORMAN STAGGERED BACK, HIS FACE FROZEN IN AN EXPRESSION OF STARK HORROR...

"YOU'RE DEAD! I SHOT YOU... FOUR TIMES... THROUGH THE HEART! YOU'RE GON- TO BE DEAD!"

"I TOLD YOU THEY KILLED ME, NORMAN. I AM DEAD... LIKE MY WIFE MARIA..."



PAUL HOLT'S COLD LIFELESS HANDS CAUGHT NORMAN KING'S THROBBING THROAT IN AN ICEY DEATH-GRIP. HIS POWERFUL DEAD FINGERS CLAMPED TIGHTLY, CUTTING OFF NORMAN'S AIR SUPPLY... CUTTING OFF HIS LIFE.

"THEY MADE ME A ZOMBIE, NORMAN! AND NOW, IF YOU WANT MY WIFE SO BADLY... I'LL HAVE TO MAKE YOU ONE, AT LEAST... THEN YOU MIGHT HAVE A SHOT OF A CHANCE..."



"HELLO!" AND THAT'S MY TELL TALK FOR THIS ISSUE OF C.K.'S PUTTING PER- SONAL, OF COURSE, THE GHOST WAS ON NORMAN... FALLING FOR A COLD BARE- LIKE MARIA. BUT EVERYTHING'S ALL RIGHT NOW. NORMAN'S BEEN ACCEPTED INTO ZOMBIE SOCIETY AND MARIA'S PAWNED HIM OFF ON A DISTANT CRUISE OF HERS. THIS GUY'S BEEN DEAD SO LONG, SHE HAD TO KEEP HER DISTANCE. ANYONE NORMAN'S HAPPY AS AN UNDERTAKER AT A PLANE CRASH WITH HER. SEEMS HE GOES FOR THE STRONG TYPE... SMELLING THAT IS... AND, TALKING ABOUT STRONG SMELLING, I'LL TURN YOU BACK TO C.K.' BYE, NOW!"





## INSIDE STORY

They couldn't be far behind, Fitch realized. Of all the dumb luck . . . for years he'd snatched parties, and he'd never fumbled so badly as this time! His chest pounding as he rounded the corner, Fitch knew that his two pursuers would be closing in on him in another minute!

He skidded to a stop suddenly. In the empty lot to his right some kids were fooling around an old ice box, which sagged ludicrously atop a mound of rubbish. One punk sat inside the enamel box, while the others yammered, pretending they were about to shut the door. It took Fitch only a moment to see beauty in this sordid scene; the ice box was a better hideout than any other he'd find!

Fitch slammed one kid when he protested against an adult joining their fun . . . the others calmed down fast. Hunching over, Fitch pulled a five-spot from his pocket and the eyes around him grew big with anticipation. Fitch swiftly tore the bill into two pieces. He handed one half of the bill to the skinny kid nearest him. "I'm gonna duck into the ice box, see?" he whispered. "Slam that door shut after I'm in . . . then just keep on playing. You get the other half when you open the door for me!"

While the kids chattered excitedly, Fitch stepped into the box and maneuvered corkscrew fashion till he was able to squat down inside. "Okay!" he called. "When I rap on the side of the box, you open 'er up and get the other half of your reward! Now slam 'er closed!"

A tight fit, Fitch thought, a smile on his face. It was dark, and already the perspiration was beginning to swim down the small of his

back. Bar sitting it out in the ice box was a lot cooler than sweating out a prison sentence!

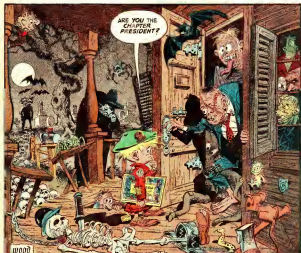
The air was stale and it was hard to breathe . . . but those cops'd pass by in another moment, and he'd hop out and make a getaway!

While he squatted inside the sealed box, two figures in blue raced around the corner. One of them pointed at the boys in the empty lot. At the same moment, the kids spotted the police. With a yelp of fear, the boys scattered, their legs thrashing frantically as they ran away. "T-They catch us here again," one boy granted, "and they'll run us in! Last time they warned us to stay outa this lot, or we'd all go to jail!"

In another minute the boys were gone, and the police ran on. The lot was silent. Except for the deep-throated groaning inside the abandoned ice box.

After the footsteps died away outside, Fitch pounded on the enamel side of the box . . . pounded till blood from his slashed knuckles ran down the slick surface. With all his strength he hurled himself against the door, but it held firm.

It was growing hot in the box . . . increasingly hard to breathe. Fitch's fingers ripped his collar open, but it didn't help. There was a curious buzzing in his ears, and he found it painful to keep his eyes open. His heart was beating strangely in his chest, and the white-hot lump in his throat seemed to be growing . . . seemed to be filling his whole muscular body, as if it would soon burst. Just one breath of air, that's all he needed! Let the cops come and take him . . . let them throw him into solitary! Just let him gulp some air, and relieve the agony that was melting his insides! Air . . .



## YOU, TOO, CAN MEET NEW FRIENDS! JOIN THE **E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB!**

SEND FOR YOUR MEMBERSHIP KIT TODAY. RECEIVE A FULL-COLOR 7½ X 10½ ILLUMINATED CERTIFICATE, A STURDY WALLET IDENTIFICATION CARD, A SHAZZY EMBROIDERED SHOULDER PATCH, AND A STUNNING ANTIQUE BRONZE-FINISH BAS-RELIEF PIN.

FOR AN INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP, FILL OUT THE COUPON AND SEND IT IN, TOGETHER WITH 25¢. IF FIVE OR MORE OF YOU WISH TO JOIN AS AN AUTHORIZED CHAPTER, ENCLOSE EACH MEMBER'S NAME AND ADDRESS ALONG WITH 25¢ FOR EACH NAME, AND INDICATE THE NAME OF THE ELECTED CHAPTER PRESIDENT. WE WILL NOTIFY EACH PRESIDENT OF HIS CHAPTER NUMBER, EACH MEMBER, CHAPTER OR INDIVIDUAL, WILL RECEIVE HIS KIT DIRECTLY... BY RETURN MAIL!

THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB  
ROOM 106  
335 LAFAYETTE STREET  
NEW YORK, 12, N.Y.

Here's my two bits! I want the things  
and stuff like the kids wearing! I want  
to meet new friends like the kids meeting!  
I'm a fan-addict! I'm mad!

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ ZONE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_

# THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

*Flash, huh? Is everybody's "high fidelity" away there days? So who am I to stand in the way of progress? So snap on your ten watt all-voice amplifier, flip on your no-rumble, non-tracking error, four-speed, auto-tune and record player with the diamond (style) variable reluctance magnetic plug-in pickup head, dust off your bass-reflex cabinet with the infinite baffles containing the twin 12 inch woofers, 6 cross-over networks, and 8 matched-in-series tweeters . . . and lend a shattered ear to the crystal clear needle scratch of these latest additions to the E.C. HORROR HIT PARADE (now arriving you at a fast response from 10 to \$4,000 cycles, plus or minus 500 db. at maximum horn-power, maximum horn level at 3600 revolutions per minute!), as sent in by Frank Field of Port Washington, N. Y.; Carl Nelson and Dolores Zaslavski of Detroit, Mich.; Rod Mawson and Jerry Zaslavski of Tulsa, N. J.; 3 Allagany High School Ghasts of Cumberland, Md.; and Paul Black and Douglas Tachman of Elmira, N. J.:*

MAGGOTS GO WHERE MY FILED  
GUYS GO  
EAT ME IN ST. LOUIS, LOOEY  
STRANGLINGS ARE HAPPENING  
SOME HAIR OVER MY SLAIN BEAU  
YOU MADE ME SHOVE YOU  
I'LL BREAK YOUR BONES AGAIN,  
KATHLEEN  
COMIN THROUGH THE EYE  
DROWNED IN THE VALLEY  
YOU WERE BENT FOR ME  
SNOOK CITY SHREW  
HAGS TO WITCHES  
WHEN YOU AND I WERE YOUNG  
MAGGOTS

*Kathleen O'Brien and Tom O'Brien of no address; Steve Wilbert of Detroit, Mich.; William Gubi of Philadelphia, Pa.; and Dem Porcellana of N. Y. C. suggest the following PULLETTING PROGRAM:*

HATCHET SQUAD  
BOAST OF THE TOWN  
FOUR SCAR PLAYHOUSE  
YOU BET YOUR WIFE  
PERRY'S IN A COMA  
MR. GIZZARD  
T.V. SCREEN CLUB  
SMILIN' ED'S FANG  
THE PRONE STRANGER  
I LATE THREE WIVES

*Somebody sent in the following LURED LYRICS:*

THE HEARSE WITH THE FRINGE ON TOP  
FROM OKLAHOMACIDE

Ratt and bats and owls better disperse  
When I take you out in this hearse  
When I take you out in the black hearse  
With the fringe on top  
Watch that fringe and see how it dances

As I drive the hearse through the gutter,  
Crazy folks will break through their shutter  
And their jaws will drop.

The driver's dead

The upholstery's skin  
The dash-board'll drive you insane  
With a solid glass bottom

You can look right in  
In case you run over a pedestrian  
Two bright fog-lights out on the leader  
Spurk ash at blood if you go on a leader  
An unemployed mortician who'll service you  
If you care to flop  
In that true little hearse  
With the fringe on the top

*Al Fuller of Portland, Ore. joins the PERVERTED PARODY to the tune of "Fretted"*

Fretted you're draining' when you're blue.  
It isn't very hard to do  
And you'll find blood without an end  
Whenever you proceed  
Remember, anyone can drain  
And nothin's drier if it may seem  
The class you haven't got could be a lot  
If you proceed  
You'll find a body you can share,  
One you can call all your own  
Just close your eyes, blood is there  
You'll never be alone  
And if you sing this melody,  
You'll be preening just like me  
The blood is mine, it can be yours, my friend,  
So why don't you, proceed.

*Gary Kimball of Droper, N. C. sends me flying with the FETID POETRY:*

I used to be happy with a narrow tag,  
Any old bag, and a drunken rag  
But now, no more,  
For that was before  
I read an E.C. mag!  
Now I'm sad and I post  
Till an issue collect out  
They make me happy, even  
I EAT AGAIN!

**COMMERCIALS:** This offer expires with this offer!  
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**HERE'S A TALE OF BLOODY T.V. PROGRAMING! I CALL THIS DUD...**

# CLOTS MY LINE



THE BLOOMING BLOOM LIGHTS BLAZED WHITE-HOT. THE RED SIGNAL ATOP THE KINESCOPE CAMERA BLINKED ON. GEAR AND CHAINS WITHIN THE CAMERA BEGAN TO WHIRL SOFTLY. ALL THE PREVIOUS BUSTLING AND MAD CONFUSION HAD SUDDENLY COME TO A HUSHED END. THE "CAMMY" T.V. PROGRAM BEGAN, USHERED ONTO TAPE TO BE USED AT SOME FUTURE DATE, BY THE UNCTUOUS, SLAVE VOICE OF ITS MASTER-OF-CEREMONIES, AMON CHATFIELD...



MR. PIERCE GRAYSON SAT BESIDE THE MASTER OF CEREMONIES, SMILING NERVOUSLY. FROM TIME TO TIME HE GLANCED AT THE PANEL SITTING STERNLY ACROSS THE SMALL STUDIO STAGE...



MR. CHATFIELD NODDED TOWARD THE SLIM THREESOME OPPOSITE...





WOW, PANEL, MEET OUR GUEST...  
MR. PIERCE DRAYNOR. YOUR JOB  
WILL BE TO DISCOVER MR. DRAY-  
NOR'S OCCUPATION... WHAT HE  
DOES? IN OTHER WORDS...  
GUESS THE GUEST? FIRST,  
WE'LL BEGIN WITH THE WILD  
GUESSES! MISS PROMICK?



MR. PIERCE DRAYNOR SAT IN THE  
GUEST SEAT WITH AN AMUSED SMILE.  
GLIDING INSIDE, THEY'D NEVER  
GUESS HIS OCCUPATION. IT WAS  
SOMETHING THEY WOULDN'T EXPECT  
JUST TO LOOK AT HIM...



HIS NEAT OUTER APPEARANCE... HIS  
QUIET VOICE... HIS RATHER MEER AIR...  
THERE WAS NOTHING OBVIOUS ABOUT  
MR. DRAYNOR THAT WOULD GIVE HIS  
OCCUPATION AWAY. MR. DRAYNOR WAS  
BORN TO ENJOY THIS.



THEY WERE ALL WRONG... SO VERY WRONG. MR. DRAYNOR  
LEERED SLYLY AT THE HUMMING KINESCOPE CAMERA,  
WORKING THE VAST AUDIENCE THAT WOULD VIEW THIS AT  
SOME FUTURE TIME... AND HE REMEMBERED HOW HE'D  
MET MR. CHATFIELD THAT NIGHT LAST WEEK... IN THAT  
CRUMBY LITTLE EAST-SIDE JOINT...



WELL, GUESS THE GUEST? IS  
A PANEL PROGRAM. MR. DRAY-  
NOR, OUR PANEL HAS TO GUESS  
YOUR OCCUPATION BY  
KINESCOPE IT! YOU KNOW...  
PUT IT ON TAPE FOR A FUTURE  
REROADCAST OVER OUR NETWORK.



OH, THERE'S NO STUDIO  
AUDIENCE AT A KINESCOPE  
TAPE, MR. DRAYNOR. JUST  
THE PANEL, MYSELF, THE  
CAMERAMAN, AND... YOU!



GOOD? JUST LET ME CHECK MY  
SCHEDULES! YES! FINE!  
WE'LL TAKE YOU NEXT  
TUESDAY NIGHT... AT  
10:30 P.M. HERE'S THE  
ADDRESS, YOU'RE SURE  
YOU'LL COME?



OH, I'LL BE  
THERE, MR. CHATFIELD.  
I WOULDN'T MISS  
THIS FOR ANYTHING.

MR. DRAYNOR'S THOUGHTS RETURNED TO THE PRESENT AS MR. CHATFIELD SMILED...



THEY PASSED FROM ONE TO THE OTHER, NARROWING IT DOWN, GETTING TO THE HEART OF THE MATTER. MR. DRAYNOR HAD HELPED THEM ALONG, SNIGGERING TO HIMSELF. HE'D WANTED THEM TO GET CLOSE... VERY CLOSE. AND MR. CHATFIELD HAD JUST SAT BACK, SMILING.



THEY LEANED FORWARD, HANGING ON HIS ANSWER. BREATHLESSLY, DRAMATICALLY, DRAYNOR WHISPERED. DELIBERATELY, HE LOOKED TO MR. CHATFIELD, WHO SEEMED TO BE ENJOYING THE UNCOMFORTABLE TURN THE QUEST HAD TAKEN. MR. DRAYNOR LICKED HIS LIPS, BEING CAREFUL TO KEEP THEM CAREFULLY CLOSED AS HE ALWAYS DID IN PUBLIC.



THE QUESTIONS BEGAN INNOCENTLY ENOUGH... TOO INNOCENT, MR. DRAYNOR INSTANTLY COULD THEM ON. MR. CHATFIELD SEEMED TO BE ENJOYING THE PROCEEDINGS.



MR. CHATFIELD HAD TOLD MR. DRAYNOR HE COULD ASK HIM OR EMASCULATE HIS YES-OR-NO ANSWERS IF HE CARED TO, SO LONG AS HE DID NOT DELIBERATELY LIE. THAT WAS ALL RIGHT WITH MR. DRAYNOR.



MR. DRAYNOR SAW THE SUDDEN TWITCH OF MISS PRONICK'S LIPS NOW AS A CLUE LEANED INTO HER MIND AND HER EYES WIDENED IN WONDER. MR. DUNKEL PASSED TO HER, HER VOICE WAS HESITANT... FEARFUL.



THE PANEL GASPED IN UNISON, EXCHANGING STARTLED GLANCES. DRAYNOR CHUCKLED SOFTLY, WHISPERING THAT OLD CLUE TO MR. CHATFIELD WHO NODDED HAPPILY.



DESPERATELY THEY HURLED QUESTIONS AT HIM, HOPING THEY WERE WRONG AT WHAT THEY SUSPECTED...



PETERS SEEMED TO BE MENTALLY GAGGED, MAKING THE DIRECT QUESTION LIKE SOME HORRIBLE BLIND LYING BEFORE HIM...



THE GRINNING, BLOATING GUEST CHOSE HIS WORDS CAREFULLY, FOR THEIR FULLEST AND MOST SATISFYING MEANING. IT WAS SO DELIGHTFUL, WATCHING THE PANEL SWEAT AND GLOOM...



IT WAS DUNNELL'S TURN AGAIN, BUT HE WAS STILL AFRAID TO COME OUT WITH IT OPENLY. HE TRIED TO APPROACH IT IN A ROUNDABOUT WAY, LIKE A FEARFUL MAN SKIRTING THE EDGE OF A DEEP, DEADLY PIT...



THEY WERE ALL BEATING AROUND THE BUSH, AFRAID TO NAME THE RIDICULOUS OCCUPATION TORTURING THEIR NIMES. MISS PROMICK LOOKED POSITIVELY ILL AS SHE STAMMERED...



MR. CHATFIELD'S EYES GLEAMED AS HE WARNED THE PANEL OF THE FLEETING TIME. IT WAS THE TRIUMPH HE'D PLANNED ALL ALONG. THAT'S WHY HE'D INVITED MR. GRAYNOR AT RIGHT. IT ALL FIT IN SO NICELY. QUITE ALOVELY TORTURING THIS...



THE PANEL BRUNK NOW AS DRAYNOR LEERED AT THEM, MOCKING THEM, DEFTING THEM... DARING THEM TO PIN HIM DOWN. MR. CHATFIELD SAT BACK, WONDERING IF THEY'D HAVE THE NERVE...



MR. DRAYNOR GIGGLED. MR. CHATFIELD LOOKED SURPRISED...



MR. CHATFIELD LAUGHED...



MR. CHATFIELD TURNED TO MR. DRAYNOR...



...THIS SOLID OAK, HAND HEFTY OILY LINED, BRASS NAILED CABINET... FOR YOU TO REST IN ETERNAL REPOSE FOREVERMORE...



A CABINET?? SAY! WHAT KIND OF A PROGRAM IS THIS?



...VAST MANUFACTURER OF  
RED INK!



MR. DRAYNOR LAUGHED OUT LOUD,  
FORGETTING TO HIDE HIS POOR  
TEETH, BEHIND HIS FINGERHILL...

DRAYNOR: YES!  
THAT'S RIGHT!  
PLAIN OLD  
RED INK!

CHAFFIELD: WE  
THOUGHT  
YOU'D  
BEHIND  
US...



DRAYNOR'S LAUGH CHOKED AND DIED.  
THE MEMBERS OF THE PANEL WERE  
RISING FROM THEIR SEATS... COMING  
TOWARD HIM.

ANTON! HOW  
COULD YOU!  
LETTING US  
SQUIRM  
THROUGH THE  
WHOLE AWFUL  
THING.

OH, I COULDN'T  
RESIST! WHEN  
I FOUND OUT  
WHAT HE DID, I  
JUST COULDN'T  
RESIST!



CHAFFIELD ROSE, STANDING OVER DRAYNOR. AND THE  
CAMERAMAN, TOO, LEFT HIS WHIRLING MECHANISM TO  
JOIN THE GROOGLING PANEL MEMBERS AS THEY SLIDED  
TOWARD THEIR INVITED GUEST....

I KNEW YOU'D THINK, FOR  
ONE HORRIBLE MINUTE, THAT  
HE WAS ONE OF US!

GOOD LORD!



THEY LOOKED OVER THE INK MANUFACTURER, HEMMING  
HIM IN, THEIR SHARP FANGS GLISTENING IN THE WHITE  
LIGHT FROM THE NOT KLEES...



YOU SEE, MR. DRAYNOR!  
WE ARE THE FAM-  
PIRES!

OH, NO! NO!  
YAAAAAH!!!

MR. DRAYNOR FLEW AS THEY BENT OVER HIM, SINKING THEIR NEEDLE-  
SHARP FANGS INTO HIS FLESH... SUCKING... GULPING... DRAWING THE SCAR-  
LET LIFE-FLUID FROM HIS WEAKENED BODY. AND JUST BEFORE THE DARK-  
NESS CLOSED IN, DRAYNOR HEARD MR. CHAFFIELD ROSE, WITH HIS BLOODY  
MOUTH, AND CLOSE THE "CANNED" SHOW...



BE SURE TO BE WITH US NEXT WEEK  
WHEN "GUESS THE GUEST" IS PRESENTED  
BY THE SUPERNATURAL PRIVATE-TV  
NETWORK. OUR PROGRAM AT THAT  
TIME, WILL CONSIST OF A PANEL OF  
THREE AVERAGE GHOULS AND  
ANOTHER UNSUSPECTING  
INVITED GUEST...

HEY, NEW GUTE IDEA, DR. FLEWES...  
HAVING A PRIVATE-TV NETWORK  
FOR THE GRAVEYARD GALLERY?  
OF COURSE, IT'S BROADCAST OVER  
U.H.F. THAT'S ULTRA-HORRIBLE  
FREQUENCIES! IN COLOR, TOO!  
ALL PRETTY FLESH-CRIMSON AND  
BLOOD-RED! AS FOR POOR MR.  
DRAYNOR... WELL, WE GOT TO USE  
THE PRICE HE'D WON! SOONER THAN  
WE EXPECTED, TOO! AND NOW, THE  
OLD WITCH WAITS WITH HER  
MORDED MEAT



COOKING IN HER  
CRUDDY CALL-  
DROG! BY THE  
WAY! DID YOU  
JOIN THE E.C.  
FAM-ASPECT  
CLUB YET?  
LOOPY! THE MORE

# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEY, HEY! AND NOW, IT'S DELIRIUM DESSERT TIME IN C.K.'S MORNING MUCK-NUG... AND YOUR SHROUDER - JERIC, YOUR FEESTERING FRAPPE-FEEDER, YOUR SORDID SUNDAY-SLOPPER, THE OLD WITCH, IS READY TO DISH OUT HER LATEST COOL, CAULDRON CONCOCTION... A DELIGHTFULLY ENJOYABLE TALE OF EVIL, EMBROIDERY AND CREEPY OROGNETING AND NAUSEATING KNITTING WHICH I CALL...

## ACCIDENTS and OLD LACE

THE STILL NIGHT OUTSIDE THE BOARDING HOUSE WAS SUDDENLY SHATTERED BY THE SICKENING IMPACT OF TWO TONS OF METAL AND RUBBER AND GLASS AND FLESH MEETING A SOLID WALL OF BRICK AND CONCRETE. THE PAINFUL SCREAMING OF BRAKES PRECEDING THE CRASH STILL ECHOED INTO THE NIGHT AS THE ROOMERS POURED OUT ONTO THE PORCH AND DOWN THE WOODEN STEPS. ERIC HOLMBORN JOINED THEM AS THEY RUSHED TO THE MESS OF TWISTED FENDERS AND PULVERIZED WHEELS, TORN MUSCLES AND SHATTERED BONE, AND THICK BLOOD THAT Oozed FROM THE WRACK AND POOLED LIKE A SCUM-LET LAKE UPON THE COLD SIDEWALK.



ERIC HOLMBORN STOOD BEHIND THE THREE OLD LADIES THAT SHARED THE HUSBAND NEXT DOOR TO HIS. HE WATCHED WITH SATISFACTION AS THEIR MOUTHS DROPPED OPEN DUMBLY AND THEIR EYES GLAZED IN HORROR AND THE COLOR DRAINED FROM THEIR AGED AND WRINKLED FACES AS THEY BEHELD THE DEATH SCENE. AND ERIC HOLMBORN SMILED...



HE WATCHED THEM TURN IN DREAD AND REVOLUTION AND SCURRY LIKE OYSTERS OVER THE BOARDING HOUSE LEARN TO THE SAFETY AND SANCTITY OF THE IMPROVING STRUCTURE THAT HAD BEEN THEIR HOME FOR THE PAST TWELVE YEARS...



AND HE KNEW THAT SOON HE WOULD HAVE ANOTHER FABULOUS TRAGEDY TO SELL TO HIS FRIENDS, MILTON... A TAPESTRY WOVEN FEVERISHLY BY THREE PAIRS OF SHAKLES AND HER-YOUR HANDS GUIDED BY THREE PAIRS OF MILKY BLOODSHOT EYES THAT HAD LOOKED UPON THE HORROR OF VIOLENT ACCIDENTAL DEATH...



AS THE HASTILY SUMMONED AMBULANCE SCREAMED UP TO THE CRASH SCENE IN ITS USELESS MERCY TRIP, ERIC HOLBEN CAVED HIMSELF INTO A RICKETY PORCH ROOMER AND THROBT BACK TO THE BEGINNING OF ALL THIS... TO THAT VERY FIRST DAY HE'D COME TO THE BOARDING HOUSE...



ERIC HAD BEEN AN **ART DEALER** BACK IN NEW YORK. HE'D HAD A SMALL GALLERY BUT IT HAD NEVER BEEN VERY SUCCESSFUL. THE ARTISTS THAT HAD COME TO HIM WITH THEIR CANVASES AND SCULPTURINGS HAD NOT BEEN TOO GOOD. HE'D BEEN FORCED TO CLOSE THE GALLERY AFTER A WHILE. PEOPLE HAD STOPPED COMING TO BUY...



LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, WE HAVE A **NEW ADDITION** TO OUR LITTLE FAMILY! THIS IS MR. ERIC HOLBEN...

YOU'RE JUST IN TIME FOR **DINNER**, MR. HOLBEN?

SO ERIC HAD COME TO MILLVILLE TO BEGIN AGAIN. HE'D HAD NOTHING SPECIFIC IN MIND. HE'D JUST PACKED HIS THINGS IN NEW YORK AND TAKEN A TRAIN WEST. AND WHEN HE'D BECOME TIRED OF BEING, HE'D BOTTEN OFF. AND IT'S BEEN AT MILLVILLE...

OH, I'M SORRY! THIS IS **GRACE**... AND **CHARLOTTE**... AND **EMMA LOU SALSBUURY**. THEY LIVE IN THE ROOM **NEXT DOOR** TO YOURS...

HOW DO YOU DO, LADIES?



ERIC HAD NODDED ASSENT TO THE THREE OLD LADIES AND FISHED AT HIS FOOD. HIS THOUGHTS A MILLION MILES AWAY. WHAT COULD HE **DO** NOW THAT HE'D COME TO MILLVILLE? HOW LONG COULD HE **LAST** UNTIL HIS MONEY RAN OUT?



WHAT DO YOU **DO**, MR. HOLBEN? I MEAN, WHAT **BUSINESS** ARE YOU IN?

WHY... I USED TO BE AN **ART DEALER**, MRS. CARTER!

**GRACE? CHARLOTTE? EMMA LOU? DID YOU HEAR?** MR. HOLBEN IS AN **ART DEALER**. YOU **MUST** SHOW HIM YOUR **TAPESTRIES!**

**TAPESTRIES?** WHY, I...

OH, MR. HOLBEN WOULDN'T BE INTERESTED, JANET!



THE GIRLS ARE SAY, MR. HOLBEN. THEY WOVE WONDERFUL TAPESTRIES. AFTER DINNER, YOU MUST SEE THEM...

IT'D BE DELIGHTED.

HED AGREED TO LOOK AT THE SALSBUURY SISTERS' WORK MERELY AS A CONDEMNATION... TO AVOID WOUNDING THEM. AND THE ONE THEY'D SHOWN HIM HAD BEEN JUST WHAT HED EXPECTED.

IT'S VERY PRETTY! FINE CRAFTSMANSHIP! GOOD COLORFUL... AH.

IS IT WORTH ANYTHING, MR. HOLBEN?

BUT THEN, HED SPIED THE TAPESTRY THAT HAD BEEN ROLLED UP AND ALMOST HIDDEN FROM VIEW AND HED ABSENTLY TAKEN IT OUT OF THE CLOSET AND SPREAD IT OPEN...

I REALLY CAN'T SAY, MRS. CARTER. TAPESTRIES LIKE THAT ARE... ARE... WHO MADE THIS?

GRACE? OH, DEAR!

THE SALSBUURY SISTERS HAD SNATCHED THE TAPESTRY FROM ERIC AND ROLLED IT UP AGAIN, APOLOGIZING...

THIS ONE'S NOT A VERY GOOD EXAMPLE OF OUR WORK!

NO GOOD AT ALL!

WE INTENDED TO DESTROY IT!

NO?

BUT THE BRIEF VIEW HED HAD OF IT HAD BEEN ENOUGH. ERIC HOLBEN HAD WAITED ALL HIS LIFE FOR THAT MOMENT...

WHEN DID YOU MAKE THAT ONE? THAT ONE IS GOOD! THAT TAPESTRY IS A WORK OF ART... AN EXPRESSION OF SHEER GENIUS...

THIS...?

THIS ONE?

SLEEPFISHLY, THE SISTERS HAD UNROLLED THE TAPESTRY AGAIN. ERIC'S HEART HAD RACED IN HIS CHEST. HIS EYES HAD MOVED SLOWLY OVER THE MINUTE STITCHES... THE DREAMY SOMBER COLORS... THE EMOTIONAL SWIRLING COMPOSITION. HED REACHED OUT, AS IN A DREAM, AND TOUCHED HIS DREAM, AND HIS DREAM HAD BEEN REAL.

THIS... IS ART? THIS... IS GOOD?

WE... WE MADE THAT WHEN MR. HOLBEN WAS KILLED! REMEMBER, GIRLS?

YES, THAT'S IT? I REMEMBER.

HE WAS HIT BY A CAR...

DROWN BY THE CORNER?

WE SAW THE WHOLE THING! IT WAS AWFUL! THE BLOOD! THE TWISTED BODY POOR MR. HOLBEN! WE MADE THIS THAT VERY NIGHT!



YES, THAT WAS THE BEGINNING OF IT. ERIC HAD TAKEN THE TREASURY TO NEW YORK, TO AN ART DEALER FRIEND OF HIS...JUST TO CHECK ON HIS OWN JUDGEMENT.

THIS IS A BOLD, ERIC! WHO DID IT? CAN YOU GET MORE? EXCELLENT! SUCH EXPRESSION... SUCH EMOTION!

HOW MUCH IS IT WORTH, MILTON?

I'LL GIVE YOU FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS FOR IT!

AND IF I CAN GET MORE FOR YOU?

I'M SURE I'LL BE ABLE TO SELL THEM TO THIS PARTY I HAVE IN MIND. I'LL BUY ALL YOU CAN GET. IF THEY'RE AS GOOD AS THIS ONE, FOR FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS EACH!

IT'S A DEAL, MILTON! WRITE OUT A CHECK! AND I'LL BE BACK SOON, WITH OTHERS!

SO ERIC HAD COME BACK AND TOLD THE SISTERS FIFTY DOLLARS EACH. OH, DEAR! THAT'S AN AWFUL LOT OF MONEY! AND THIS IS ALL FOR US?

I HAD TO FIGHT FOR IT, BUT HE FINALLY CAKE IN! AND HE WANTS MORE!

MORE?

BUT WE HAVE NO MORE LIKE THAT! WE MADE OTHERS BUT WE DESTROYED THEM!

OH, NO! THEN YOU'VE GOT TO MAKE THEM OVER!

WE COULDN'T! WE WOULDN'T BE INSPIRED!

INSPIRED? WE MADE TAPESTRIES LIKE THAT ONLY AFTER WE'VE SEEN A VIOLENT ACCIDENTAL DEATH!

THE ONE WE MADE AFTER FATHER DIED WAS OUR FIRST! HE PULL REMEMBR THE WHEELS OF A TRAIN!

AND WE MADE SIX AFTER THAT! MR. GOLDEN'S WAS OUR LATEST! WE DESTROYED THE OTHERS!

THEN, IF I COULD BRING YOU TO THE SCENE OF AN ACCIDENTAL DEATH, YOU'D BE INSPIRED, RIGHT?

IF WE SAW THE BODY?

AND THE BLOOD?

IT HAD BEEN MAGGERS! ERIC HAD HAD TO BUY A RADIO WITH A POLICE WAVELENGTH BAND, HE SAT, NIGHT AFTER NIGHT, IN HIS ROOM... LISTENING... LISTENING...

CAR 23! CAR 23! GO TO NORTH AND MAIN! SAID ACCIDENT - ONE DEAD. TWO HURT! CAR 23! CAR 23! GO TO!

CHARLOTTE! BRACE! EMMA LOO! HURRY! IT'S RIGHT NEARBY!

WHEN ONE OF THOSE PEN AND PAPER MEN CAME IN, HE'D RUSHED THE OLD GALS TO THE SPOT. MORE OFTEN THAN NOT, THEY'D ARRIVE TOO LATE.

OH, THE BODY'S COVERED UP!

WE CAN'T SEE!

WHAT? STAND BACK, YOU! IF I UNCOVER...

BUT THERE'D BEEN THOSE FORTY-NINE TIMES WHEN THEY'D ARRIVED BEFORE THE POLICE. THE SISTERS HAD GAWPED AND GAWPED AND ERIC HAD KNOWN HE'D HAVE HIS TAPESTRY BY MORNING...

WELL, IT'S ABOUT TIME! MY SISTER WAS RUNNING OUT!



THREE TIMES, FOUR HUNDRED AND FIFTY DOLLARS HAD GONE INTO ERIC'S POCKET WHILE THE SISTERS HAD RECEIVED BUT ONE NINTH THAT AMOUNT...

THIRTY... FORTY... FIFTY... THERE YOU ARE!

OH, MR. HOLBENT! YOU'RE SO GOOD TO US!

IF ONLY THERE WERE MORE ACCIDENTS, WE COULD MAKE MORE TAPESTRIES!



AND THEN IT HAD SUDDENLY OCCURRED TO ERIC! MORE ACCIDENTS! OF COURSE! WHY HADN'T HE THOUGHT OF THAT BEFORE! IF THERE WEREN'T ENOUGH ACCIDENTS... HE COULD CAUSE THEM! OF COURSE!...

GOING INTO MILLVILLE!

SURE! HOP IN!



SO TONIGHT, HE'D WALKED A SHORT DISTANCE OUT OF TOWN AND HE'D THUMBED A RIDE AND BEEN PICKED UP. AND WHEN HIS POOR UNSUSPECTING VICTIM'D LOOKED THE OTHER WAY...



HE'D DRIVEN THE CAR TO THE STREET WHERE THE BOARDING HOUSE STOOD, PLACED THE UNCONSCIOUS MAN'S FOOT ON THE ACCELERATOR, RELEASED THE EMERGENCY BRAKE, AND HOPPED FROM THE CAR...



THE CAR HAD SPED DOWN THE STREET CRAZILY, GATHERING SPEED. THEN IT'D SPIN OUT OF CONTROL AND FLOWED EXPLOSIVELY INTO THE BRICK WALL.



AND HE'D WAITED FOR THE SISTERS TO COME FROM THE HOUSE, TO SEE THE LACERATED FLESH, THE PROTRUDING BONE, THE GRIPPING BLOOD.



AND NOW HE SAT UPON THE PORCH RECKER WAIT... WHILE, UPSTAIRS, A LIGHT BLED IN THE WEAVING SISTERS' ROOM.



"MIGHT AS WELL GO UP AND SEE HOW THEY'RE DOING!"

ERIC ENTERED THE BOARDING HOUSE AND CLIMBED THE STAIRS. MRS. CARTER AND HER OTHER ROOM-ERD HAD LONG SINCE GONE TO BED AND NOW LAY ENSURING TROUBLED DREAMS OF WHAT THEY'D WITNESSED EARLIER. HE KNOCKED SOFTLY...



"WHO IS IT?" "IT'S ME! ERIC! I CAME TO MURDER!"

THE DOOR OPENED SLOWLY. ERIC ENTERED. HE LOOKED AROUND. THE CLOTH TRACKED TRULY TO THE TAP-ESTRY-STRETCHER WAS BARE WHITE AND QUITE BLANK.



"WHAT'S GOING ON? YOU HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING!" "WE COULDN'T DO ANYTHING!" "SOMETHING IS WRONG!"

ERIC BREW ANGRY. HE THOUGHT OF MILTON WRITING IN NEW YORK, WITH HIS CUSTOMER'S HUNGRY FOR MORE TAPES-TRIES. HE THOUGHT OF THE FOUR HUNDRED AND FIFTY DOLLARS AND THE GOOD TIMES IT WOULD BUY. AND HE SHOUTED...



"WASNT THAT ACCIDENT GOOD ENOUGH? DIDN'T YOU SEE THE BODY AND THE BLOOD? WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? START WEAVING!" "WE'RE NOT INSPIRED!" "WE WERENT MOVED!"

ERIC SAW THE FIVE HUNDRED DOLLAR CHECK FLYING AWAY ON WIND OF TEMPERAMENT. HE SCREAMED...



"LOOK! I DIDN'T FINGER HIM! GOLF FOR NOTHING! I DIDN'T FLY IT SO HIS CAR WOULD SLAM AGAINST THAT WALL AND FOLD UP LIKE THAT FOR NOTHING! I DIDN'T COMMIT MURDER FOR NOTHING!" "MURDER?" "OH, DEAR! SO THAT'S IT?"

THE OLD LADIES LOOKED AT EACH OTHER IN SHOCKED BEMUDGERMENT, THEY TURNED TO ERIC AMERLY.



IT'S GOT TO BE AN ACCIDENT... OR ELSE IT'S NOT ART GOOD!

YOU TRIED TO TRICK US!

MURDER ISN'T FAIR!

THEY CAME AT HIM SUDENLY, SLIDING ON AGED LEGS, FONDLING THE INSTRUMENTS OF THEIR ART, THE SCISSORS AND THE LONG SHARP NEEDLES.

IT'S GOT TO BE AN ACCIDENT... LIKE WHEN WE PUSHED FATHER UNDER THE TRAIN...

OR LIKE WHEN WE PUSHED MR. GOLDEN IN FRONT OF THAT CAR...

ON THE OTHERS WE SO CLEVERLY MANAGED WHILE YOU WERE LISTENING TO YOUR STUPID LITTLE RADIO.



THEY STOOD OVER HIM LIKE THE THREE WITCHES IN MACBETH... THEN THEIR LIVING, WRITHING CAULDRON.



IT CAN'T BE MURDER!

IT'S GOT TO BE A VIOLENT ACCIDENT!

LIKE WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN TO YOU!

MRS. CARTER AND HER ROOMMATES IN THEIR TROUBLED SLEEPS, BUT NEVER HEARD THE MUFFLED SCREAMS THAT CAME FROM THE BLOWING DISTANCE... NEVER HEARD THE SNIPING OF THEIR SCISSORS... THE CLICKING OF THEIR NEEDLES... THEIR GIGGLES OF SATISFACTION.

PRETTY, ENNA... EHEHEH! SN-HAH! LOU! PRETTY!



AND WHEN ERIC'S FRIEND MILTON STEPPED FORWARD IN HIS GALLERY TO MEET THE THREE ANGLY-LOOKING OLD LADIES WHO DEEDED WITH THEIR LONG ROUND JACKS, HE NEVER DREAMED OF THE HORRORS THEY WERE CAPABLE OF WEAVING...



NOT UNTIL THEY UNROLLED THEIR LATEST TAPESTRY OF CROCHETED VEINS AND EMBROIDERED ARTERIES AND BURN MUSCLES AND TENDONS AND FINGER-NAILS AND HAIR AND TACKED-DOWN EYEBALLS AND EARS AND STUNG-UP BONES AND CARTILAGE...



CHOKE!

HEE-HEE! YEP! THE THREE OLD BOSES WERE NOTS, ALL RIGHT. JUST LIKE ALL ARTISTS, INCLUDING THE GATTY-BOYS AT E.E. PHILL. THEY MUST BE GATTY TO DRAW THIS THING, HEH-HEH! AND TALKING ABOUT CRAZY PEOPLE, THIS WOULD BE P.K.'S. WAS WHICH YOU MURDER? HOT-HEH! AND ANYBODY WHO BUYS THIS NAUSEATING HORRORSCHE MUST BE AS BAD OFF AS THE CREeps WHO DRAW IT. WELL, I GOTTA GO NOW. I GOTTA LEAD MY IDIOT EDITORS BACK TO THEIR PADDED CELLS, BEE HOOHEE IN THE VAULT OF HORROR! "BEE HOOHEE"



IT WAS A WORK OF ART, ALL RIGHT, IT WAS ERIC GOLDEN. ALL OVER!

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FROM THE

CRYPTIC

FEATURING...



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER





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## APPENDIX B

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**Q&A**

# EMBA

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# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH! SLIDE INTO THE SLOPPY SLIMY CRYPT OF TERROR, FLEND-FANG. THIS IS YOUR CAVYEN CARETAKER OF COLD CORPSES, THE CRYPT-KEEPER, ALL READY TO START THE BRAGG, ROLLING WITH A WHALE OF A TALE OF TERROR... A BIT OF BLUES I DUG UP FROM AMONG A BILE OF OLD MARINESCRIPTS THAT WERE CLUTTERING UP A CLANKY CORNER OF MY CASHER-CAVERN. YOU'LL RETCH AT THE WRETCHED GAS PLAYED BY CAPTAIN MATT STANKE... A DRUNK OF A SEAMAN WHO IS WAITING IN EILEEN HARPER'S MODEST APARTMENT OVERLOOKING THE SAN DIEGO DOCKS RIGHT NOW TO BEGIN THIS OBOODOUS DRIS I CALL.

## FOREVER AMBERGRIS

HEH! STANKE'S THE NAME. CAPTAIN MATT STANKE, SKIPPER OF THE FREIGHTER SOLEFANA. I'M ASHORE NOW... HAPPY TO BE TAKIN' MY BASE ON THIS PLUSH SOFA JONK IN THIS NEAT LITTLE HARBOR-APARTMENT... SLOWLY BILLOWS OF COOL BLUE SMOKE FROM THIS HAWMA FIFTY-CENTER... AN' DREAMIN' OF HOW I'LL SOON BE MASTER OF THE TRIMMEST LITTLE SAIL IN THIS OR ANY PORT. I'M HAPPY 'CAUSE I LOVE EILEEN ENOUGH TO HAVE MISSETERED A MAN T' GET HEH! AND NOW...

SHE'S MINE...



YEAH! THAT'S RIGHT! I MURDERED. AND THERE IS NOTHING ANYONE CAN DO ABOUT IT. NOW, I'VE GOT THE MONEY. I'M RICH. AN' I'M WAITIN' FOR EILEEN T' COME OUT OF HER ROOM SO'S I'LL HAVE E'VERYTHIN'! SCUSE ME...



HEY, EILEEN! BLAST IT! HURRY UP! STOP FORTYIN' ME. I'VE BEEN DRESSIN' AN' COMIN' OUT OR I'LL COME IN THERE AN' GET YOU. READY OR NOT?



WAIT! YOU SEE HER? SHE'S BEAUTIFUL! GOT THE PRETTIEST FACE IN THE WORLD! AN' HER FIGURE. WELL, JUST WAIT AN' SEE! I'D RATHER T'BE HAPPY, BUT SOMETHIN' KEEPS HANGIN' AT ME. KEEPS BOTHERIN' ME!



I CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHY THAT WHALE THREW UP RIGHT THERE AND THEN. JUST WHEN I WAS WATCHIN' HIM. I NEVER SAW A WHALE DISGROSS BEFORE. NOR HAVE I HEARD OF ANYONE ELSE THAT'S SEEN IT HAPPEN.



NOW THERE'S A queer combination of things for a man in love t'be thinkin' of... A **BORDEAU** WOMAN AND A **WHALE SPIN**! BUT I CAN'T HELP IT. I GOT THE **SAME GOLF FEELIN'** IN MY INWARDS AS I GET WHEN MY SHIP IS NEARIN' A **REEF** IN A **THICK FOG**. I CAN'T SEE THE **REEF** BUT **INSTINCT** TELLS ME IT'S THERE...



AN' SOME KIND OF **CRAB INSTINCT** IS MADDEN AT ME **RIGHT NOW**. MAYBE YOU CAN HELP ME. LET ME TELL YOU 'BOUT **EILEEN** AND ME... AND MY **SHIP**... AND THE **WHALE**... AN' THE MAN I MURDERED.



BUT WHERE TO **REPAIR** ON THAT WARM SPRING MORNING, I RECKON, WAS THE **START** OF IT? WE'D DROPPED ANCHOR HERE IN **SAN DIEGO** AND ME AND MY FIRST MATE, BEN HARPER, WERE **HURRYIN'** DOWN THE **SAND-FLANK**...

I WANT YOU TO HUNK WITH US THIS TIME, CAP'N. I WANT YOU T' MEET EILEEN!



FOR SEVEN MONTHS...FROM THE TIME BEN HARPER'D SIGNED ON MY SHIP. ALL I'D HEARD FROM HIM WAS EILEEN...HOW BEAUTIFUL THIS BRIDE OF HIS WAS. AND NOW I HAD TO MEET HER...



WITH BEN HARPER BEIN' THE KIND OF A CHAP HE WAS... NOT AT ALL ON THE **RUSSED** SIDE... AND NOT MUCH ON LOOKS EITHER... I NEVER FIGURED HIM TO HAVE LANDED ANYTHING LIKE THE **BEAUTY** THAT GREETED HIM WHEN WE REACHED THEIR APARTMENT...



WELL, HAVE **DINNER** WITH US THEN, MATT. AT **LEAST** THAT...

WELL, ALL RIGHT, BEN. BUT **JUST DINNER** THEN I'LL BE ON MY WAY!

OH, MONEY. I THOUGHT THIS TRIP WOULD **NEVER END**!

IT'S GOOD TO HAVE YOU HOME, BEN, DARLING...

"BUT I COULD SEE FROM THE WAY THAT SHE TURNED HER HEAD SO'S HE COULDN'T KISS HER ON THE LIPS THAT EILEEN WASN'T AS GLAD TO SEE HIM AS SHE MADE OUT. FACT IS, AS HE WAS LOVIN' HER, SHE KEPT LOOKIN' PAST HIM TO ME..."

"SHE KEPT LOOKIN' AT ME... TALKIN' WITH HER EYES... FIRST CURIOSITY, THEN AN INVITATION... YELDING IT WAS AN ELECTRIC THING THAT PASSED BETWEEN US... SOMETHING WE BOTH UNDERSTOOD IN THOSE FIRST QUICK MOMENTS WITHOUT HAVING SPOKEN A WORD..."

"BEN INTRODUCED US, BUT I FELT I ALREADY KNEW HER BETTER'N HE DID. I FOLLOWED THEM INTO THE LIVING ROOM, WATCHIN' EILEEN, TALKIN' IN PARTS MOVIN' SENSUOUSLY. THERE WERE PICTURES BURNIN' IN MY BRAIN, TATTOOED WITH A WHITE HOT NEEDLE..."

"MATT'N SPOKE TO HAVE DINNER WITH US, HOM... BUT HE WON'T STAY ON WITH US. HE'S GOT OTHER PLANS..."



"BEN MOVED OFF TOWARDS THE KITCHEN..."

"SEE IF YOU CAN'T DO SOMETHIN' ABOUT GETTIN' MATT TO *STAY* WITH US WHILE I GO MIX-UP SOME *DRINKS*..."

"SURE, BEN..."



"EILEEN DID SOMETHIN', ALL RIGHT. SHE MOVED TOWARDS ME, SLOWLY, HER HIPS SWAYIN' EVER SO EASY. SHE KEPT LOOKIN' AT ME WITH THOSE SOFT, INVITIN' EYES, AND THEN SHE SPOKE WITH THAT SOFT, MELLOW, HONEY-FILLED, EXCITIN' VOICE..."

"YOU... WILL... STAY... ON... WITH... L... I... WE... WON'T TELL, MATT?"



"SEVEN MONTHS AT SEA WITHOUT SO MUCH AS SLIPPERIN' A WOMAN MAKES A MAN ACT WITHOUT THINKIN', I GUESS. I HAD A FRENZIED IMPULSE TO THROW MY ARMS AROUND EILEEN... PULL HER TIGHT AGAIN' ME... CRUSH MY HUNGRY LIPS AGAIN' HERS. AND SUDDENLY I WAS GON' IT?..."

"SHE PULLED BACK AT FIRST, THEN CHANGED HER MIND, AND MOVED IN TIGHT. SHE MELTED... BLENDED... LIKE WE WERE ONE. THAT'S HOW QUICK WE HIT IT OFF TOGETHER. EILEEN AND ME? I WAS PARTIN' HEAVY AND WIPIN' HER LIPSTICK WHEN SHE TENSED..."

"WHY'D YOU DO THAT, MATT?"



"SHE KNEW WHY I DID IT, THE TANTALIZING DEVIL, SO I GAVE HER A FLIP ANSWER JUST AS BEN, POOR, STUPID, LOVESICK BEN, CAME IN WITH THE DRINKS."

"...I HAVEN'T HAD A CHANCE TO KISS THE BRIDE BEFORE THIS!"

"HAH! I TOLD YOU YOU'D LIKE EILEEN, CAPN! SO ON, BE MY GUEST!"

"ER... I... I THINK I'VE TALKED MATT INTO STAYING, BEN..."

"I GAVE EILEEN A BASHFUL PECK ON THE CHEEK AND BEN GRINNED, PLEASED AS PUNCH THAT I WAS PLEASED WITH HIS WIFE, PLEASED!" "I WAS CRAZY ABOUT HER... TORTURED 'CAUSE BEN WAS ALWAYS CLOSE BY IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED. BUT THEN, ONE DAY, I GOT A CHANCE TO TALK TO EILEEN..."

"WHY'D YOU MARRY HIM? YOU DON'T LOVE HIM!"

"THAT'S PUTTING IT BLUNTLY, ISN'T IT? WELL, I'LL GIVE YOU A BLUNT ANSWER! SECURITY!"

"BEN MAKES GOOD MONEY! HE NEVER SPENT MUCH BEFORE HE GOT MARRIED! HE WANTED SECURITY TO ME, MATT... A nice HOME... CLOTHES... FOOD... EVEN THIS LITTLE GAF..."

"AND NOW, NOW THAT YOU'VE MET ME? I CAN SEE THE WAY YOU LOOK AT ME, YOU'RE IN LOVE WITH ME!"

"I DO LOVE YOU, MATT! I'VE NEVER MET A MAN I LOVED SO MUCH! BUT I WANT THE THING BEN'S MONEY GETS FOR ME..."

"AND I WANT YOU, EILEEN. I'M GOIN' TO HAVE YOU SOMEDAY, TOO! I DON'T KNOW NOW BUT I WILL! I SWEAR IT..."

"THE TWO WEEKS WENT BY AND IT WAS TIME TO MOVE OFF AGAIN. I SAW EILEEN ONCE MORE THE WAY I DID THAT FIRST DAY... WITH BEN'S ARMS AROUND HER... SHE LOOKED OVER HIS SHOULDER, BUT THIS TIME, WHAT SHE SAID WAS MEANT FOR ME..."

"BE GOOD... GOODBYE, DARLING! I'LL BE COUNTING EVERY SECOND TILL YOU COME BACK TO ME..."

"AND LATER, BEN AND I STOOD ON THE BRIDGE OF THE SULTANA, WATCHING BEN DISAPPEAR INTO THE MIST. THERE WAS NO TALKIN' BETWEEN US... ONLY OUR QUIET THOUGHTS... HIM REMEMBERING THOSE SMOKE NIGHTS WITH EILEEN... AND ME, HATTIN' HIM FOR THEM, KNOWIN' IT WAS ME SHE WANTED..."

"AND I MADE UP MY MIND RIGHT THEN THAT MY FIRST MATE, BEN HARPER, WOULD NOT BE COMIN' BACK FROM THIS VOYAGE WITH ME..."

"I KNOW, CAPN! YOU OUGHT TO HAVE SOMEBODY LIKE EILEEN TO COME HOME TO!"

"MAYBE SO, BENMAYBE SO..."

WHAT IS THERE ABOUT A MAN THAT LETS HIM LOVE ONE WOMAN... LONG FOR HER THE WHOLE TIME HE'S AWAY... AND THEN, NO SOONER 'N HE GETS PORT, SET ABOUT HUNTIN' FOR ANOTHER TO BE WITH. BEN AND HE WERE NO DIFFERENT. FROM BOMBAY TO OSAKA, JAPAN...



AFTER A PLEASANT VISIT, I REMEMBERED OTHER BUSINESS THAT NEEDED TENDIN' TO 'EM, SHOES IN HAND, I PEEDED OVER TO A PAPER WALL AND CALLED OUT...



THEN I VISITED A CRYING TOOTHY GENT WHO COULD FURNISH A LOT OF INFORMATION ABOUT A LOT OF THINGS. MOST OF THEM UNWHOLESOME. HE MARKED A CRUDE BLACK CIRCLE AROUND A TINY DOT ON A GREASY OLD MAP FOR WHICH I GAVE HIM ONE CRISP U.S. DUCK.



I LEFT THE SHODDY LITTLE SHOP AND MADE MY WAY BACK THROUGH CRICKED JAMMED STREETS TOWARD THE SHIP, MY HEAD SPINNING WITH THOUGHTS OF EILEEN AND BEN AND HOW HE WASN'T GOIN' TO SEE HER AGAIN... NOT IF I GOT MY DUCK'S WORTH OF INFORMATION OUT OF THAT HISSIN' GRININ' OLD GENT...



WE WERE UNDER WAY AGAIN BEFORE MIDNIGHT. BEN WAS LYIN' ON HIS BUNK, WEARY, BUT NOT TOO TIRED TO TALK ABOUT HIS FAVORITE TOPIC... EILEEN. I SAT AT MY DESK, STUDYING THE GREASY OLD MAP.



WHERE'RE YOU TALKIN' ABOUT, MATT? OSAKA WAS OUR LAST PORT OF CALL.

THIS IS A PRIVATE DEAL, BEN, A FRIEND OF MINE IN BOMBAY ASKED ME TO DROP A BARREL OF FUEL OIL AT THIS LITTLE ISLAND. I PROMISED I WOULD.



WE REACHED THE TINY SPECK OF FORSAKEN CORAL AND LAID THE THIRD NIGHT OUT. EXCEPT FOR A GLIMMER OF LIGHT HERE AND THERE IN THE BLACKNESS, THERE WAS NO SIGN OF LIFE ON THE ISLAND. WHILE THE BARREL OF FUEL OIL WAS BEING LOADED INTO THE DUMKEY I ELECTED BEN TO TAKE IT ABOARD...

IS THERE TIME FOR ME TO GO SOME HUNTIN', SKIPPIT? HEY, BEN. DEAR MATEY, I'LL WAIT FOR YOU...



'BEN' REACHED EXACTLY AS I'D EXPECTED HIM TO REACT. I WATCHED HIM ROWACROSS THE LAGOON TO A SMALL DOCK AND TIE-UP. A MINUTE LATER HE DISAPPEARED INTO THE DARK, RAT-INFESTED TOWN OF THE ORIENT'S ISLAND DUMPS BECAUSE FOR ITS CONDEMNED... CONDEMNED TO DEATH, THAT IS, BY BUBBING PLAGUE! THE BLACK DEATH! NOT THIS DEATH...



'BEN' CAME DOWN FAST. HE STARTED SWELLIN' AROUND HIS ARMPITS AND OTHER PLACES. SOON, A FESTERING, GREENISH-YELLOW SORE COVERED HIM AND A STINKING, NAUSEATING SUBSTANCE Oozed FROM HIS FLESH. I KEPT CLEAR OF HIS QUARTERS FROM THEN ON AND ORDERED THE CREW TO DO THE SAME...

I KNOW THE SYMPTOMS... THE SORE'S BORN, POISONIN' OF THE BLOOD, AND THAT COUGH. THAT'S WHEN IT'S DANGEROUS THE PLAGUE IS IN HER LONES NOW. A MAN CAN CATCH IT EVEN TALKIN' T' HIM.

BUBBING PLAGUE... GAST... THE BLACK DEATH!



'IT WAS ALMOST DARK WHEN MY FIRST MATE RETURNED TO THE SHIP, EXHAUSTED BUT PLEASED WITH HIMSELF. HE'D HUNTED DOWN AND GOTTEN' WHAT HE WANTED. HE'D GOTTEN MORE THAN HE WANTED! IT TOOK TWO DAYS, THEN BROKE OUT...

...CAN'T PICK MYSELF UP OUT OF M' BUNK, MATE. HOT... FEVER... CHILLS. I'M SICK...

YOU'LL HAVE TO DOCTOR YOURSELF, BEN. WE'RE A THOUSAND MILES FROM THE NEAREST PORT...



'AT THE MENTION OF THE DREAD, HIGHLY CONTAGIOUS DISEASE, THE CREW FLEED AND SHUDDERED AS ONE MAN, IT WAS PART OF MY PLAN LETTIN' THEM WORRY... REMINDIN' THEM. BUT ONE DAY, THEY FOUND SOMETHIN' ELSE TO OCCUPY THEIR MINDS. I FOUND 'EM TOSSIN' GARBAGE OVERBOARD...

WHAT'RE YOU MEN DOIN'?

FEEDIN' THE WHALE, CAP'TN STANKE. HE'S BEEN FOLLOWIN' US ALL MORNIN'! SEET?



'I'VE SEEN WHALES BEFORE BUT NEVER SO CLOSE AS THAT GREAT BALL BREAK. HE LEPT UP WITH THE SHIP... OPENIN' HIS TANKIN' CAVE OF A MOUTH TO LET THE GARBAGE IN...



'WHAT KEPT BEN HARPER ALIVE, I'LL NEVER KNOW. MAYBE HE WAS RAGIN' AGAINST DEATH JUST TO SEE EILEEN ONCE MORE. ANYHOW, THE NEXT FEW DAYS WERE TERRIBLE ONES AND I TRIED TO RELAX BY TOSSIN' CHUNKS OF MOLDY BEEF AND OTHER REFUSE TO THE WHALE TAILIN' US...



'THE WHALE STAYED WITH US. SOMETIMES HE'D ROLL AND DIVE AND HE WOULDN'T SEE HIM FOR HOURS, THEN SOMEBODY'D YELL "THAR 'E BLOWS" AND HE'D BE BACK GRASIN' ANOTHER GARBAGE FEAST...



"AT NIGHT I'D GO OUT ON DECK, BREATHIN' IN THE SALTY WARM PACIFIC AIR, AND I'D THINK ABOUT ME AND ELSBEN. I WAS THINKIN' OF HER THE RIGHT ONE OF THE MEN SAME A-BURNIN' AND SCREAMIN'..."

"...HIS FACE IS ALL ROTTEN BLACK, CAPT'N... AND HIS FLESH IS MORN' LIKE IT'S-- CHOKED-- CRAWLIN' WITH MAGGOTS!"

"SEN, OUT OF HIS ROOM? GOOD LORD! HOW COULD THE MAN WALK?"

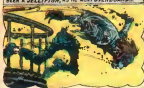
"AND THEN, I SAW HIM! BEN WAS A WALKIN' DEAD! HIS BODY A MASS OF BLACK ROT. SMALL SPONYBANGS DRIPPIN' AWAY WITH EACH STUFF STAGGERIN' STEP HE TOOK. HIS CLOTHES WERE A TATTERED STINKY MESS OF GREENISH DRIED OOZE AND CONGEALED BLACK BLOOD. MY OWN-ER CAME UP SOLD IN MY THROAT."

CHOKED

"I HOLLERED FOR SPOTLIGHTS AS HE STUMBLERED ACROSS THE DECK. MEN CAME RUSHIN' WITH GAFFS, THEIR FACES TWISTED IN DISGUST. BEN KEPT SHUFFLIN' DOWN TOWARDS ME..."

"GET HIM OVER THE SIDE, YA BILGE LIKE! DUMP HIM BEFORE HE HAS US ALL WASTIN' AWAY WITH THE BLACK ROT!"

"THEY TRIED HOORIN' THEIR GAFFS INTO BEN, BUT THE TIPS CAME AWAY WITH HORRIBLE SOBS OF FOUL-SMELLING ROTTEN FLESH. THEY TRIED SHOVIN' WITH THE POLES. BEN SOT OUT IN TWO BY THE ANK, WITH NO MORE SOUND THAN IF HE'D BEEN A JELLYFISH, AS HE WENT OVERBOARD."



"BY MORNIN', I FELT BETTER ABOUT THE WHOLE THING. WE'D LEFT WHAT WAS LEFT OF BEN HUNDREDS OF MILES BEHIND US AND I'D COMMITTED A MURDER NOBODY'D BE ABLE TO PIN ON ME. I HAD MY MIND ON LOVELY ELSBEN WHEN TOM BALLARD, MY SECOND MATE, CALLED ME TO THE RAIL..."

"OUR WHALE'S STILL WITH US, CAPT'N!"

"THAT'S RIGHT! BUT HE'S ACTIN' QUEER... ISN'T HE?"



"AN' THAT'S WHEN IT HAPPERED! THE HUGE BALL SPERM SHATTERED CONCLUSIVELY. A TREMENDOUS YELLOW AND GREY BUBBLING MASS OF WAX-LIKE STUFF SPURTED OUT OF HIS CANTHOUS NOOTH. BUBBLIN' UNOULATING ON THE OIL-PA SURFACE..."

"LET'S GET OUT OF HERE, CAPT'N! THAT STENCH IS CHOKIN' ME!"

"NOIN, BY HEAVENS! THAT'S WHALE SPERM, AMBERGRIS!"



"AMBERGRIS? FLOATIN' GOLD! THE SPERM OF A SPERM WHALE, NEEDED FOR THE BEST PERFORMED THAT FOUL-SMELLIN', FATTY NEED WAS WORTH A FORTUNE!"

"REVERSE ENGINES! PREPARE TO LOWER AWAY ALL BOATS! A HUNDRED DOLLAR BONUS TO EACH MAN WHO HELPS..."





"I EMPTIED A HUNDRED BARRELS OF MY FUEL OIL CARGO TO HOLD MY AMBERGRIS. A WEEK LATER WE DOCKED IN SAN DIEGO, WHERE I CALLED BLAZES FROM A PORT HEALTH OFFICIAL...BUT NOT UNTIL AFTER I'D DISPOSED OF THE AMBERGRIS."

COMING INTO PORT AFTER A PLAGUE DEATH ON YOUR SHIP MAY COST YOU YOUR PAPERS, CAPTAIN STARK!

THE DEVIL WITH MY PAPERS. I'M A RICH MAN AND I'M GOING TO MARRY THE MOST BEAUTIFUL GIRL IN THE WORLD!

"THE PERFUME MAKER NOT ONLY PAID ME SIXTY-TWO THOUSAND DUCKS FOR MY AMBERGRIS, BUT ALSO SENT ME A FLAGON OF THE SCENT MADE FROM IT. WHEN I FINALLY GOT OUT OF QUARANTINE, I BROUGHT IT TO EILEEN."

I DON'T WANT TO HEAR HOW BEN DIED, MATT! ALL I KNOW IS YOU ARE HERE... THAT'S ALL THAT MATTERS!

HERE, BABY! HERE'S ENOUGH PERFUME TO BATHIE IN! AND IT'S ONLY THE BEGINNING!

SO THAT'S IT? NOW, EILEEN IS IN HER ROOM THERE, GETTIN' INTO 'SOMETHING COMFORTABLE'. AS SHE PUT IT, WHICH IS PROBABLY A SHEER BLACK MISLEISE, AND I'M THINKING ABOUT WHY SOME STUPID WHALE THREW UP WHEN IT DIED...



I OUGHT TO BE GLAD IT HAPPENED! IF IT HADN'T, TO BE SIXTY-TWO THOUSAND DOLLARS POORER, AND... AND... OH, LORD!



BEN! THAT BLASTED WHALE MUST HAVE SWALLOWED THE BLACK-ROTTED DISEASED REMAINS OF BEN HARPER! THAT'S WHY HE THREW UP!



EILEEN! EILEEN, OPEN UP! QUICK! DON'T USE THAT PERFUME, EILEEN! DON'T USE IT!



EILEEN HARPER COMES OUT OF HER ROOM NOW, GRINNING ECSTATICALLY... THE BLACK SPONGY, ROTTING FLESH DROPPING FROM HER FACE. THE WHITE BONE GLEAMING THROUGH HERE AND THERE, CAPTAIN STARK SCREAMS IN HORROR AT THE SIGHT AND STENCH OF HER...



WHY NOT, MATT? IT'S SUCH A LOVELY-SMELLING PERFUME, DARLING.

YAAAAHHHHH!

HEH, HEH! AND THAT'S THE LEAD-OFF PARR, YELP-HOURS. DID YOU NOTICE THAT EILEEN REALLY DIDN'T LIKE THE PERFUME, MATT SAYS HE'D DIDN'T YOU SEE THE WAY HER FACE DROPPED? WELL, I GOT A DATE WITH MY EDITORS TO PLAY A GAME OF HEARTS. WE USE REAL DRES I'LL BE BACK LATER WITH ANOTHER TERROR TOME, NOW I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE MULL-KEEPER, BY THE WAY, THE WHALE IN THIS TANK WAS SORRY HE BROUGHT THE WHOLE THING UP!



- THE END -

# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

WEE, HEE! SCARED, HNT? GOOD! OLD HAL DEMER-HICK, O.K., HAS SOFTENED YOU UP FOR THE CHILL! NOW YOUR VAULT-KEEPER IS READY TO PUT YOU ON ICE WITH A GRIPPINGLY GRAPHIC ACCOUNT OF A BREEDY BOON WHO GURMBED HIS WAY INTO A DIVE! HE WAS A REAL BONE GUY WHEN HE WAS THROUGHT TO COME INTO THE VAULT OF HORROR, AND LISTEN TO THIS EERIE EPISODE I CALL...

## BURIAL at SEA

YOU'RE NAME IS BARNET HOAG. YOU'VE ALWAYS CRAVED SOLITUDE AND NOW YOU'VE FOUND IT ON THIS BLEAK LONELY, WINDSWOPT, SUN-TORTURED FLORIDA KEY. . . THIS GRIM ACRE OF UNREFLED PARADISE. YOU GUIDE YOUR OLD CAR INTO A SANDY, BRISTLING PALMETTO PATCH, AND YOU UNLOAD YOUR GEAR. . .



SWEAT-ING IN A SEA OF SWEAT, BASKING UNDER THE LOAD OF FISHING TACKLE, BAIT BOX, FOOD HAMPER AND GALLON JAR OF WATER, YOU'VE TEMPORARY RELIEF IN THE SHADE OF SAUNT LONG-NECKED PINES AS YOU TRUDGE TOWARD THE GLARING WHITE BEACH.



YOU PASS A LINE OF SILENT PALMS LEFT LEANING LANDWARD BY SOME LONG AND VIOLENT WIND THAT HAD ONCE ROARED BY. AND, UNLOADING YOUR EQUIPMENT ONTO THE BURNING SAND, YOU STUDY THE GURDAILY-SHAPED BROTESQUE MANGROVE TREES, THEIR EXPOSED BRACKLEBEE ROOTS INTERTWINING, SPRAWLING FROM THE BRINE AT THE SHORE.



YOU TURN AT THE SOUND AND SEE NO FISH, BUT AN ALMOST-NAKED, BEARDED, GORRY-BROWN OLD MAN WITH GREY HAIR DOWN TO HIS SHOULDERS EMERGE FROM THE DEPTHS AND MAKE HIS WAY TOWARD THE BEACH.



THEN, BARNET HOWL, YOU SWEAR UNDER YOUR BREATH... BECAUSE YOU ARE NO LONGER ALONE. YOUR SOLITUDE IS GONE. YOU BEGIN TO FEEL H... TO LEAVE IN DISBURT... WHEN YOU FEEL THE SUDDEEN, STRONG TUGGING ON YOUR LINE...



THE FISH BREAKS WATER, STRUGGLING TO SPIT OUT THE HOOK AND YOU SEE THAT IT IS A BARRACUDA. FINALLY, YOU BRING THE VICIOUS SCOUNDREL OF THE SEA TO LAND. YOU STARE DOWN AT YOUR GASPING CATCH, SHIVER AT THE SIGHT OF ITS BARED RIPPER TEETH.



BEYOND, THE TURQUOISE ATLANTIC RESTS TRANQUILLY BETWEEN TIDES. SODD, HOOK BAITED, FEET BAKED, YOU TREAD FAR OUT OVER THE SAND AND CORAL BOTTOM BEFORE REACHING KNEE-DEEP WATER. YOU BEGIN TO SURF-CAST AND ALL IS PEACE AND QUIET EXCEPT FOR THE SOUND OF A FISH NEARBY, LEAPING FROM THE SEA.



YOU STAND, STARING, AS HE MOVES SOUNDLESSLY ACROSS THE SAND TO THE BROKEN HULK OF AN ANCIENT VESSEL THAT HAD BEEN TOSSED, HALF-HIDDEN, AMONG THE PALMS. AS YOU WONDER WHY YOU HADN'T NOTICED THE GRIZZLED WHIRL BEFORE, THE OLD MAN WAIVERS INTO IT THROUGH A CRUDE DOORWAY CUT INTO ITS ROTTING SIDE.



YOU PAKE AND LEAVE YOUR SHIRT-RED PARADISE, GRATIFIED, AT LEAST, THAT THE OLD MAN HADN'T BEEN YOU AND SUSPECTED YOU TO ENIGMA, BORING TALK. SUDDEENLY, A LONG BLACK SHADOW FALLS ACROSS YOUR PATH. A THIN, PIPING VOICE BRINGS YOU UP SHORT...



SPIT IT OFF FROM THIS PROFFYF MISTW! YOU DON'T BELONG HERE!

YOU TURN NOW, BARRY, FACING THE SPIZZLED OLD MAN. NUDE, EXCEPT FOR A TATTERED FILTHY PAIR OF BUCK PANTS THAT REEK OF DEAD FISH. HE PORTS A RUSTY, ASSED MUSKET AT YOUR CHEST...



YOU HEARD ME, MISTUH? I COME JUST TO THIS PROPERTY, SO IT'S *MAINE!* NOW *BYE!* FORE I BLAST YU CLEAN T' KINGDOM COME!

YOUR FRIGHT OF THIS SPIZZLED OLD MAN WITH THE ANCIENT WEAPON OWES WAY TO ANGER AT HAVING BEEN CHEATED OF YOUR LOANED—FOR SOLITUDE...



I WAS GOING, YOU DIRTY OLD COOT... BUT NOW I GOT A MIND TO STAY!

HEY STAYH, MISTUH, AH' I'LL BE GUTTIN' YU UP FER SHARK BAIT!

THERE'S A COLD GLINT IN HIS ICE-BLUE EYES, AND HIS SUN-BRONZED CROSS-HATCHED BEIN GRABS TAIT ACROSS HIS JAWS. YOU RELENT IN THE FACE OF THE WEAPON IN THE OLD MAN'S TIGHTENED GRIP AND YOU MOVE OFF ANGRILY THROUGH THE PINES...



BOILING WITH RESENTMENT, YOU STOW YOUR GEAR INTO YOUR CAR, THEN YOU SAID BACK TOWARDS THE BEACH, UNWILLING TO BOW TO THE OLD ONE'S ILL WILL...



HE *BE OFFED* ME WHAT, BUT I'M NOT LEAVING!

I'LL SHOW THAT OLD GRAB. I'LL BURN 'EM OUT. I'LL SET FIRE TO THAT FILTHY WRECK HE LIVES IN AND I'LL BURN HIM OUT FOR GOOD!



SLOWLY, SILENTLY, STEALTHILY YOU MAKE YOUR WAY BACK TO THE BARNACLE AND SALT-ENCRUSTED WOODEN CARCASS OF HALF A ONCE-PROUD VESSEL. YOU'RE FILLED WITH VENGEFULNESS AND CURIOSITY. YOU STOP OUTSIDE THE ROTTED DOOR. A METALLIC SLEAM CATCHES YOUR EYE...



WHAT... WHAT'S THAT? ON THE SAND! LOOK! LIKE A... A...

YOU PICK UP THE GLITTERING OBJECT. YOU STUDY IT, TURNING IT OVER IN YOUR HAND...



IT *BE!* IT'S A GOLD COIN! REAL GOLD!

YOUR FIRST REACTION IS TO GET AWAY WITH YOUR PRIZE. YOU HURRY, STUMBLING, TO YOUR CAR...THE ANCIENT GOLD COACH-ON SLUTTERED TIGHTLY IN YOUR SWEATY PALM. YOU DRIVE HASTILY OFF THE LONELY HEL SPEEDING NORTHWARD ACROSS THE OVERSEAS HIGHWAY BRIDGES...



MAYBE THIS COIN'S BEEN THERE ALL THE TIME AND THE OLD GOOT NEVER...NOTICED...IT...

YOU EASE UPON THE GAS, YOU STOP RUNNING. YOU THINK SOME MORE AS YOU DRIVE SLOWLY NORTHWARD. SOON, YOU REACH ANOTHER KEY, ROLL UP TO AN EATERY THERE, AND WALK TOWARDS IT...



WHAT IF THE LUNATIC IS SITTING ON A FORTUNE IN GOLD? WHAT GOOD WOULD IT DO HIM? HE'S TOO OLD TO ENJOY IT!

OVERSEAS EATS  
KEY LINE PIC-UPER  
BAIT & TACKLE

ISN'T THAT RIDICULOUS, BARNEY? THINK AGAIN. THAT'S IT! NOW YOU'VE GOT IT...



...OR MAYBE...MAYBE HE'S GOT MORE HIDDEN IN THAT WOOD? A FORTUNE IN GOLD...MAYBE...

YOU SIT AT A FLY-FLECKED COUNTER, STARING AT THE MENU, HARDLY SEEING IT.



AND WHO'D BELIEVE HIM IF HE BABBLES TO THE LAM ABOUT HIS GOLD BEING MISSING? FOR THAT MATTER, WHO'D MISS THE OLD MAN?

YES, SIR?

SO, BARNEY HORN, SPEED AND DETERMINATION ETCH THEMSELVES INTO YOUR FACE AS YOU MAKE YOUR DECISION...



I'M GOING BACK THERE...TOMORROW! AND IF HE'S GOT MORE GOLD, I'M GOING TO GET IT!

WHAT'LL IT BE, MISTERY?

YOU ARRIVE BACK AT "THE OLD MAN'S KEY" ALONG WITH THE NIGHT. PASS AS YOU DID THAT MORNING AMONG THE PALMETTOS, AND, TAKING A JACKKNIFE, YOU SUIT YOUR CAR.



QUIET WHISPERING IN THE PINES ACCOMPANY YOUR SLOW APPROACH TO THE BEACH. THE ELEGANT CHIRPS OF COIGAS SURROUND YOU, WITHIN, YOU FEEL THE RAPID THUMPING OF YOUR HEART. A RISING GIBBONS MOON LIGHTS YOUR WAY TO THE BAD BULK AMONG THE PALMS OR THE BEACH.



NOW YOU ARE THERE, BARNEY, YOUR HEAVY BREATHING BLENDING WITH THE BREEZE BLOWN PALMPHONDS THAT SOUND SO MUCH LIKE A SUMMER SHOWER, AND WITH THE GENTLE LAPPING OF THE SURF UPON THE NEARBY SHORE. A SOFT ORANGE LIGHT GLEAMS THROUGH A CRACK IN THE DOOR. YOU PEER IN...

YOU SEE HIM IN THE FLICKERING CANOLE SLOW, HIS HAD EYES GLEANING AS HE LETS A TRICKLE OF GOLD COINS FALL THROUGH HIS GRABLED FINGERS INTO A WOODEN BOX ON THE ROUGH TABLE AT WHICH HE SITS. THE FAINT CHINK OF CLINKING METAL INVITES YOU IN...

THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE, BARNEY SLAM OPEN THE DOOR! THAT'S IT! SCARED ALMOST OUT OF HIS WITS, THE OLD MAN DROPS HIS TREASURE INTO A DIRTY WRINKLED CLOTH AND BALLS IT UP IN HIS TREMBLING HANDS.



YOU STEP TOWARD HIM. THE OLD MAN DROPS HIS RAG-WRAPPED TREASURE OF COOGLDONS TO THE FLOOR, THEN, BENDING AS THOUGH TO RETRIEVE THEM, HE COMES UP AGAIN, THE RUSTED OLD MUSKET IN HIS BONY FANGS... POINTED AT YOUR HEAD.

THE OLD MAN CHORTLES, PULLS BACK HIS FOREFINGER, SQUEEZING THE MUSKET'S TRIGGER, BUT NOTHING HAPPENS. NO BLAST. NO SHOT. NOTHING. THE BOLT, FROZEN BY YEARS OF RUST, DOESN'T MOVE. A COLD TWISTED GRIN WREATHES YOUR BREATH—STAINED FACE AS HE SAVES ON.



YOU LEAP AT HIM, BRINGING THE IRON JACKHAMMER DOWN ON HIS SKULL, FEELING THE CRUSHING OF BONE.

YOU PICK UP THE BUNDLE AND EMPTY THE COINS INTO THE MISER'S BOX... THROWING THE RAG AWAY.



AGAIN AND AGAIN YOU STRIKE, UNTIL HE SINKS LIFELESS TO THE FLOOR, THEN ONE MORE TERRIBLE BLOW AS HE LIES THERE, JUST TO MAKE SURE, AND HIS BRAINS SPATTER ABOUT THE WORK-WEARIED BOARD.

YOU SCRAMBLE ABOUT THE BRINE-FOULED WRECK. ANGRY. ANGRILY SEARCHING...

THERE *MUST* BE MORE!  
THERE'S *GOT* TO BE MORE!



BUT YOU'VE GOT IT ALL, BARNEY, AND KNOWING THAT, YOU SAS TO THE FLOOR, SICK AND TIRED WITH DISAPPOINTMENT. BUT THE OLD MAN'S PIECE OF DIRTY CLOTH CATCHES YOUR EYE...



DOTTED LINE... MARKED "100 YARDS"... TO A BIG "X"... FROM A LINE MARKED "LOW TIDE"... AND AN ARROW MARKED "H"? BY GOD! IT'S A MAP!

WELL, I'LL BE... IT'S A TREASURE MAP THE OLD MAN MADE. IT *MUST* BE WHERE THE OTHER HALF OF THE SHIP IS. THAT'S WHAT IT MUST BE! YEAN? SURE? A PIRATE SHIP, BROKEN IN TWO BY A HURRICANE? HALF SUNK? HALF WASHED ASHORE... THIS HALF!



THAT'S WHAT HE WAS DOIN' WHEN HE WAS COMIN' OUT OF THE WATER. HE WAS BRINGING BACK THESE *GOINGS* FROM THE SUNK HALF OF THE WRECK! IT'S *OUT THERE*!



SLOWER, BARNEY. SLOWER NOW. THINK IT OUT. YOU'RE ON TO SOMETHING. JUST THINK IT OUT *CAREFULLY*. SLOW OUT THE OLD MAN'S LANTERN. THAT'S IT! NOW GO OUTSIDE. LOOK OUT THERE... AT THE SEA...

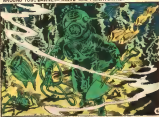
I'M NOT MUCH OF AN UNDERWATER SWIMMER! BUT I MAY BE ABLE TO RENT A DIVING SUIT SOMEWHERE! YEAN? I'LL DRIVE TO KEY WEST...



SO YOU DRIVE ALL NIGHT, BARNEY, AND YOU'RE IN KEY WEST WHEN DAWN LIGHTS THE SKY. BY LATE AFTERNOON, YOU'RE BACK AT THE "OLD MAN'S KEY" WITH A DIVING SUIT, ENOUGH ROPE TO GO OUT 50 YARDS, A GASOLINE-DRIVEN COMPRESSOR, THE WORKS. BREATHING WITH EXCITEMENT, YOU TAKE A SPACE AND START FACING OUT INTO THE SURF...



DEEPER AND DEEPER YOU GO... OUT UNDER THE ROLLING BREAKERS. OUT INTO THE SEA. AND THE SEA IS ALIVE AROUND YOU, BARNEY... ALIVE AND FRIGHTENING...



YOU GO OUT PAST THE MAP'S 50 YARDS AND THE SEA AROUND YOU IS FULL OF WONDERFUL BARNY, BUT NO BROKEN PIRATE HULL, NO SUBMERGED HALF-HULK DO YOU SEE...

I MUST'VE BEEN *CRAZY* TO TAKE THAT OLD COOT'S MAP SERIOUSLY'!



AND THEN YOU SEE IT, RISING LIKE A SHADOW AHEAD OF YOU. THE MARKER.

THAT'S IT? THAT'S IT? THERE AIN'T NO COAT, HE'S HAD THE TREASURE, HE WASN'T BRINGIN' IT OUT? HE WAS BRINGIN' IT IN HERE. BURYIN' IT?



THERE, SIX FATHOMS DOWN, BEFORE THE ALGAE AND MOSS-ENCRUSTED MARKER, YOU BEGIN TO DIG. YOU DIG DOWN AND YOU DIG OUT... AN OLD, EMPTY HOLE WITH MOORS, NO CHEST, NOTHING. YOU CLIMB OUT, BITE WITH FRUSTRATION...

MAYBE THE MARKER SHOWS WHICH SIDE TO DIG ON. I'LL JUST SCRAPE OFF THE SLIME...



WITH YOUR SPADE, YOU SCRAPE OFF THE GREEN ALGAE AND MOSS AND SLIME. AND YOU TURN COLD, STABBING BACK IN A FRENZY AT WHAT YOU SEE...



NO! NO! GOOD LORD!

YOUR AIRLINE FOULS AROUND THE MARKER, STOPPING YOU FROM RUNNING. TERRORIZED, YOU TAKE AT THE RUBBER TUBE. THE MARKER TILTS FORWARD, SLOWLY... FALLING... AS IF IN SLOW MOTION.



...PINNING YOU DOWN INTO THE HOLE YOU'VE DUG... PINNING YOU DOWN INTO YOUR GRAVE. FOR YOU KNOW THAT BEFORE LONG, THE GAS IN THE COMPRESSOR OUT ON THE SHORE WILL RUN OUT AND THE AIR WILL BE GONE AND YOU'LL SUFFOCATE. THE OLD MAN, THE *CRAZY* OLD MAN! HE WAS *RIGHT*? HE *DID* KNOW? HE *WAS* PREPARED? THE LETTERS CUT INTO THE MARKER LAUGH AT YOU.



HEH, HEH LIKE THEY SAY, KIDNIES? BARNY *DUG* HIS HOLE... NOW HE'S DYING IN IT. HE THIRSTED AFTER GOLD AND SETTLED FOR A BELLYFUL OF SALT WATER. WELL, THAT'S MY TREASURE-TERROR-TALE FOR THIS ISSUE OF *DR. H. MORRIS*

MAB, NOW I'LL TURN YOU BACK TO HIM FOR A TALK ABOUT A *BLONDE* FLIRT WHO FINALLY MADE SOME *DESSERT*. *QUICKEN? NOO!* I'LL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MAB, THE *HAULT OF HORROR* 'EYE, NOW'







# GUNMAN



With the cardboard carton propped against the wall, Ed Grant pressed the door buzzer: chimes rang inside the apartment and footsteps scurried toward him. The safety latch scraped open, the door swung wide and Ed Grant stepped into the apartment, pushing the carton in front of him. "What . . . what's *ablu*?" the woman asked in surprise, pointing to the carton.

"Delivery," Ed Grant answer, locking the door shut with his heel. He slipped the latch into place and dumped the carton on the floor. "B-But I didn't order any . . ." the woman protested. Then she saw the gun Ed Grant held. "You . . . a . . ."

"A guy working his way through college," Ed Grant said flatly. "Don't make me thank you on this one, lady. . . I want all the-cash and jewelry you got here!"

Grant heard a high-pitched voice coming along the corridor from one of the bedrooms, and he turned warily. A cow-headed five-year-old careened into the room, deeply involved in banking an imaginary aircraft he was piloting. He stopped in his tracks, his mouth gaping. "Hey!" he whinnied. "Who's this, mom?"

"L-Look, missy," the woman pleaded. "We don't have much money, see? My husband's only a lab assistant at the chemical plant on River Street. He just got outa school himself, and . . ."

"Can it!" Ed Grant snapped. "C'mon . . . the CASH! Where's it at?"

The kid, who had sauntered over to the foyer table, suddenly pulled a cap pistol from a toy holster slung over the chair and whirled toward Ed Grant. His finger squeezed the trigger and his high-pitched voice exploded in a series of raucous gumbor sounds. Ed Grant started at the sound, then began to laugh deep in his throat. "The kid's a lil' whacky, ain't

he?" he snickered. Then, nudging her toward the kitchen with his gun, he added, "Let's find *char dough*, *sisster*!"

While the woman nervously pulled a purse from a kitchen drawer, the kid grabbed a tiny telephone buried in a toy box and yelped into the receiver. "Sheriff! Ambie over here pronounced Varmint's robbin' my mom!"

Ed Grant tilted his head far back, opened his mouth and roared with delight till tears came to his eyes. For several minutes he shook with uncontrolled mirth. Subsidizing slowly, he wiped his eyes with the back of his hand. "The lil' nut," he chorled. "A real character, ain't he? Right outa television?"

The kid's face clouded and he ran from the room. A moment later, as Ed Grant peered into the purse he had grabbed, the boy returned. He held a small water pistol. Ed turned, started to guffaw again. "Jerko, here," he exploded. "A reg'lar half-pint hero, ain't he?"

The boy's face tightened . . . he squeezed the trigger and a stream of smoky fluid sprayed into Ed Grant's face. He dropped his gun and a shriek of horror poured from Ed Grant's scored lips. He staggered backwards, his eye-sockets raw cavities where the eyeballs had just been burnt out of his head. One trembling hand went to his face . . . passed over the ruined flesh, which, was curling away with a bubbling sound, revealing stark yellowish bones beneath. Ed Grant screeched in agony, his face already a ghastly oozing wound. He sagged to the floor.

The boy felt his mother's arm tagging him sharply, as she yanked the water pistol from him. "Just wait till I tell your daddy what you just did!" she snapped. "He told you a hundred times never to fill your gun with his *sulfuric acid*!"

**NOW...IF YOU JOIN...YOU GET THE BULLETIN...FREE!**



**YES, FANS...YOU, TOO, CAN BE LUCKY LIKE MELVIN, HERE! YOU, TOO, CAN COMPLETE YOUR COLLECTION OF E.C.'S! YOU, TOO, CAN JOIN THE**

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THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB  
ROOM 106  
215 LAFAYETTE STREET  
NEW YORK, 12, N. Y.

So here's my \$02! So I could've joined for half the price a couple of months back! So now I get a bulletin subscription. So who says I want it. So I'm a sucker. So put me down and send me the stuff what the kids wearing and the bulletin I don't want but I'm paying for..

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_  
STATE \_\_\_\_\_

\* (\$02 BONUS CHECKS FOOT THE BALL FOR THE BULLETIN, WFTF)  
(JUST WE HAD TO RAISE THE PRICE! SO BEHOLD)

\* (\$02 \$02 MEMBERSHIP WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER JUNE 1, 1964)

# THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

Heh, heh! Here comes our morbid mailman with the latest sack of corded stamped squares containing pseudo correspondence from you creeps. So I'll just stick my honey paw into the "YEEHAWWWWW" Mmmmmmm! Very funny! Somebody sent a large coupon in a small envelope. A strange trick! Where was I? Oh, yes... so I'll just stick a pair of scissors into the old mail sack and print a few poems and stuff for your perusal.

Love Harroth of The Bronx, N. Y. joins the Poetical Parody to the tune of "I'm Looking Over A Four Leaf Clover":

I'm turning you over  
With a sharp lawn mower  
That I never used before.  
The first blade's for chopping.  
The second will hack,  
The third will dispatch  
Your head from your neck.  
No need explaining.  
The one remaining  
You won't hear anyone  
I'm turning you over  
With a sharp lawn mower  
That I never used before.

From the creative clasp of John M. Gault who lives in a box in Waterville, Me comes this Steam Song Satire of the tune "Heart of my Heart":

Part of my heart,  
I love that engine,  
Part of my heart,  
Bring back a vein to me.  
When we were kids  
On the corner of the street  
We were rough and ready guys,  
But, oh, how we could handle barres  
Part of my heart,  
Mount friends were faster than  
Too bad we had to part  
I know a tear would glaze  
If once more I could listen  
To that gang that are part of my belt.

This next Lullabyer Lyric is the brainwork of Conrad J. Falk, of Chicago, Ill who pokes fun at the tune "Singing in the Rain" with these warped words.

I  
I'm swinging in the rain,  
Just swinging in the rain.  
What a ghastly old feeling,  
My neck's stretched again.  
My eyes bulge with pain,  
As I goggle this refrain.  
I'm swinging, swinging in the rain.

II

The soap has been sprung,  
My neck has been wrung,  
My tongue is just dangling,  
I know that I'm done.  
My face is all red,  
I know that I'm dead,  
I'm swinging, swinging in the rain.

Clara Bealla Crossland of McKeesport, Pa. who claims to be a part in the strictly artistic sense of the word, submits this lovely little poem to pluck your heart strings:

My boyfriend is a charming thing  
I love him 'cause he is so sweet.  
One side of his ugly face is gone,  
The other hangs with rotting meat.

Raymond Newman of Chicago, Ill writes these poetic verses:

Oh, for the life of a vampire,  
That's what I really crave  
To prove the face of death is right,  
And sleep each day in a grave.

John Newkirk of Maparth, N. Y. desires his love and this poem:

Blood and Guts  
All over the street,  
And me without  
A spoon to eat.

Paul Block and Douglas Tushman (they had to collaborate on this epic, yes) of Elmhurst, N. Y. knock a famous nursery rhyme out:

Hickory Dickory Dock  
The man went down the road.

Well, enough yet. Now for a limeric.

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

I was walking down the street reading my heart EC, when all of a sudden there was a scratch, a scream, and a man lay on the road. He had been hit by a car. The car sped away. I ran over to see what I could do. The man lay there and said, 'I'm dying! Help me!' So I helped him. My sentence is going to be carried out next Monday.

Bob Wilson  
Napara Falls, N. Y.

And now, on the spare left, the commercially. A job reception to this mag will set you back \$7.00 for eight weeks' monthly envelope... and all this for the ad. dress for ad. orders, poetry, comments, and criticism is:

The Crypt-Keeper  
Room 706, Dept. 44  
225 Lafayette Street  
N.Y.C. 12, N.Y.

HERE'S A TERROR-TALE OF A  
CHICK WHO FINALLY WORMED

# The PROPOSAL



PEARL HAD ALWAYS *LIVED* LIFE IN THE BEST OF STYLE... WITH FINE CLOTHES, JEWELRY, A PARK AVENUE APARTMENT, AND A CHAMPAGNE CADILLAC. AND PEARL HAD ALWAYS MARRIED TO FIND *RICH* HUSBANDS WHO WOULD BE WILLING TO *KEEP* HER IN THE STYLE TO WHICH SHE'D BECOME ACCU- TOMED... LIKE *FREDDY HOWELL*, FOR INSTANCE. FREDDY HOWELL WAS PEARL'S *LATEST* RICH-HUSBAND-BANKRUPT... HE *WAS*, THAT IS, UNTIL HE ANNOUNCED...



NOW, FREDDY WAS *GONE*. PEARL HAD LOST *ANOTHER* BILL-PAYING HUSBAND, AND THE *WIFE* WAS AT THE PENTHOUSE DOOR. PEARL WAS DESPERATE. A *ODD* DESPERATE PLANS WERE FORMULATED IN HER PRETTY RED HEAD AND DISCARDED BEFORE SHE REMEMBERED THE QUIET, GENTLE, LONELY MAN ACROSS THE HALL...



SHE WHAPPED HER FLINTY BLACK NOCLISEE AROUND HER SHAPELY FIGURE AND STEPPED BOLDLY INTO THE HALL AS HOWARD ELLIS LOOKED HIS APARTMENT DOOR BEHIND HIM AND TURNED TO THE ELEVATOR...



PEARL LET HOWARD STARE. SHE LET HIS EYES TRAVEL OVER HER FULL YOUNG BODY JUST LONG ENOUGH. THEN, SHE PUT ON THE SHY EMBARRASSEDMENT ACT...

OH, I... I'M  
FEARFULLY  
SORRY, MR...  
MR... WHY WERE  
HIS EYES AND  
I DON'T EVEN  
KNOW YOUR NAME!  
I'M PEARL, DRAKE!  
MISS PEARL, DRAKE!

ELLIS! HOWARD  
ELLIS! I... I  
... WELL, HERE'S  
THE ELEVATOR!

PEARL INMEDIATELY CURSED THE HIGH SPEED CONVEYANCE THAT HAD RUSHED UPWARD THROUGH THE STEEL THROAT OF THE BUILDING AND INTERRUPTED HER PROGRESS. SHE TURNED AND GLIDED BACK TO HER APARTMENT AS THE ELEVATOR DOORS CLOSED.

GOOD MORNING,  
MR. ELLIS... AND  
THANK YOU FOR  
THE TIME!

NOT AT ALL,  
MISS DRAKE...

SHE CLOSED THE DOOR, LEANED BACK DISTRACTEDLY AGAINST IT, AND FROWNED...

I WONDER IF I OVERPLEASSED MY HAND WALKING OUT LIKE THIS? I WOULDN'T WANT HIM TO THINK I'M A CHEAP FEMALE WOLF ON THE PROWL. HE LOOKS SO PROPER AND PROUD. I WOULDN'T STAND A CHANCE IF HE THOUGHT THAT!

THEN PEARL SMILED. SHE WALKED SLOWLY ACROSS THE LIVING ROOM, HER VOLUPTUOUS FIGURE SWAYING SENSUOUSLY...

BUT HE IS A MAN! HE'S GOT ALL OF THE INSTINCTS OF A MAN. I'LL BET HE CAN'T GET ME OFF HIS MIND!

SHE STOPPED AT THE DESK, HER MIND RACING... SCHEMING. PLANNING HER NEXT MOVE. SHE FINGERED THE DISPOSABLE NOTICE SHE'D RECEIVED IN THE MORNING MAIL...

THEY'VE GIVEN ME A WEEK TO FORK OVER THREE HUNDRED DOLLARS HERE OR OUT ON THE STREET I GO. AND I HAVEN'T GOT IT. I HAVEN'T GOT HALF THAT MUCH!

PEARL Pondered her problem another moment and then, with her lovely face assuming a determined air, she hurried into the bedroom TO DRESS...

MR. HOWARD ELLIS IS MY ONLY GUY I'VE GOT TO GET HIM. ONE WITH ON THE OTHER!

THE ELEVATOR OPERATOR STARED HER UP AND DOWN AND SMILED LASCIVIOUSLY WHEN SHE ASKED HIM THE INFORMATION SHE NEEDED. IT WAS OBVIOUS HE'D HEARD OF HER PLAN...

I'D LIKE TO FIND OUT WHAT MR. ELLIS DOES FOR A LIVING? WHAT FORM HE WORKS FOR?

WHY DON'T YOU FIND OUT WHAT I CAN DO, INSTEAD, HONEY?

PEARL KNEW WHEN TO ACT HAUGHTY AND INDIGNANT. UNDER OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES, THE ELEVATOR OPERATOR MIGHT HAVE AROUSED HER INTERESTS, BUT NOW...

WHY, YOU *FRESH*...

SHE STOOD PROUD AND TRIUMPHANT AS HE RUBBED HIS BEET-RED CHEEK WHERE SHE'D SLAPPED IT. THEN, SHE SOLELY REPEATED...

I ASKED YOU IF YOU KNEW MR. ELLIS'S **STOCK BROKER BUSINESS?** NE... HE'S A **STOCK BROKER** I... THINK HE HAS HIS **OWN FIRM**

PEARL CROSSED THE LOBBY TO THE PHONE BOOTHS AND SCANNED THE CITY DIRECTORY...

ELLER... ELLER... ELLIS, MR. HERE IT IS! **HOWARD ELLIS AND ASSOCIATES, INC., STOCK BROKERS, INVESTMENT COUNSELORS, 231 WALL STREET...**

OUTSIDE THE LUXURIOUS APARTMENT, PEARL CONTEMPLATED HAILING A CAB, THEN CONSIDERED HER Waning FINANCES, AND WALKED UP THE SIDE STREET TO THE SUBWAY. SHE ROSE UNCOMFORTABLY IN THE CROWDED NOISY CARS, HER QUINCY NOSE TWITCHING SCORNFULLY AT THE SUFFOCATING SCENT OF THE NURANITY SURROUNDING HER. SHE TRIED TO LOSE HERSELF IN HER PLAN OF STRATEGY...

I'LL WAIT FOR HIM OUTSIDE THE BUILDING AT LUNCH HOUR. OF COURSE IT WILL BE AN ACCIDENTAL MEETING.

AT NOON, PEARL WAS AT THE ENTRANCE TO 231 WALL STREET, HER CAMPAIGN FOR THE CONQUEST OF THE UN-SUSPECTING MR. ELLIS CRYSTAL-CLEAR IN HER MIND...

I'LL CONVINCE HIM TO TAKE ME TO LUNCH AND HE'LL SEE I'N NO CHEAP DAME! HE'LL SEE I GOT HIGH-CLASS TASTE! HE'LL... OH-OH! HERE HE COMES... AND HERE I GO...

I SEE YOUR PARDON, MA'AM? I DIDN'T SEE...

I'M SORRY! IT WAS ALL MY FAULT! I... WHY, IT'S MR. ELLIS!

MR. ELLIS! THIS IS A COINCIDENCE, RUNNING INTO YOU LIKE THIS. OH, BUT YOU DON'T REMEMBER ME IN MY CLOTHES, DO YOU? I REMEMBER THESE CLOTHES, REMEMBER THE MORNING? PEARL DRAKE? THE PENTHOUSE APARTMENT ACROSS THE HALL?

OH, BUT YOU DON'T REMEMBER MISS DRAKE AND THE STOP-FRO WATCH!

BEFORE HOWARD COULD OBJECT, PEARL STEERED HIM TO A TAXI, TOOK HIS HAND, AND LED HIM INTO IT AFTER HER...

YOU DO REMEMBER WELL I OWE YOU SOMETHING FOR GOING SO KIND THIS MORNING, MR. ELLIS. I'M TAKING YOU TO LUNCH, THE PLAZA DRIVE!

THE PLAZA? BUT THAT'S WAY UPTOWN, MISS DART.



BY THE TIME THEY'D FLOWED UPTOWN THROUGH THE TRAFFIC AND ARRIVED AT THE BEAK PLAZA DINING ROOM, PEARL'S EFFULGENT DISPOSITION HAD WARNED THE BKY MILLIONAIRE...

RIGHT BOSSIE, HOWARD, AND THE ROAST PHEASANT UNDER GLASS SOUNDS DELICIOUS.

HAVE YOU GOT THAT, WAITER? I'LL HAVE A HALF SANDWICH ON WHOLE WHEAT TOAST AND A GLASS OF MILK.



THROUGH THE MEAL, PEARL CAREFULLY ENCOURAGED HOWARD. BY DESERT, HE WAS STRUGGLING TO SAY SOMETHING. BY FOLDS-CAFE, HE'D FINALLY SUMMONED UP THE COURAGE TO PUT HIS HAND ON HER'S AND BLURT...

PEARL...GULP...MAY I TAKE YOU TO DINNER AND A SHOW...TONIGHT?

OH, I'D ADORE THAT, HOWARD!



AND THAT NIGHT, AFTER THEIR DATE, THEY RETURNED TO THE PENTHOUSE FLOOR OF THE LUSH PARK AVENUE APARTMENT HOUSE. PEARL DROPPED HER COOR AND SPOKE TEMPTIBLY IN A SOFT HONEYED TONE...

WOULDN'T YOU COME IN FOR A NIGHTS MEETING IN THE MORNING, DEAR?

THANK YOU, MS. PEARL. I HAVE A BOARD MEETING IN THE MORNING AND I MUST GET TO BED.



SO AFTER A BUCK GOODNIGHT, PEARL FOUND HERSELF ALONE IN HER APARTMENT, FRUSTRATED AND ANNOYED.

E. I MUST BE LOSING MY TOUCH!



BUT HOWARD ELLIS PHONED PEARL THE NEXT DAY FROM HIS OFFICE AND HER CONFIDENCE IN HER EVENTUAL SUCCESS WAS RESTORED...

WELL, PEARL? WHAT SHALL IT BE TONIGHT? IT'S SUCH A LOVELY NIGHT, NOW, I'D RATHER NOT BE INDOORS. LET'S TAKE A HARBOR THROUGH THE PARK!



PEARL KNEW WHERE TO FIND ATMOSPHERE CONGENIAL TO ROMANCE. THE RIDE THROUGH THE PARK IN THE HARBOR CAB WAS JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR HAD ORDERED. SOON, HOWARD WAS HOLDING HER HAND AND WHISPERING SOFTLY...

IT IS A LOVELY NIGHT, PEARL...BUT NOT NEARLY AS LOVELY AS YOU ARE!

WHY, HOWARD...



PEARL WAS AN OLD HAND AT THIS GAME OF TRAPPING A MAN. SHE KNEW HOW TO PRESS HER ADVANTAGE... HOW TO MOVE HER SOFT FULL-LIPS CLOSE TO HIS INVITING...

OH, PEARL!



AND SHE KNEW HOW TO ACT SHY AND COY AND SURPRISED WHEN HE'D FINALLY FALLEN INTO HER LITTLE TRAP.

I-I'M SORRY, I-I-I DON'T  
PEARL! I BROUGHT MIND, HOWE!  
HAVE DONE THAT... I-I'M VERY  
FOND OF YOU!



SOON THEY WERE BACK OUTSIDE HER APARTMENT. PEARL LEANED AGAINST HER DOOR, FINGERING HOWARD'S COAT LAPEL AND GENTLY, GENTLY DRAGGING HIM AGAINST HER SUFIERERS BODY... WHISPERING...

KISS ME AGAIN, PEARL...  
HOWE...



SHE KISSED HIM WITH MOIST RAVISHING HUNGRY LIPS. SHE KISSED HIM AS SHE KNEW HE'D NEVER BEEN KISSED BEFORE. AND THEN SHE LEFT HIM STANDING THERE... LIMP... TREMBLING... GASPING FOR BREATH. SHE LOCKED THE DOOR BETWEEN THEM AND STOOD IN THE DARKNESS OF HER APARTMENT, GRINNING WITH SATISFACTION...

ONCE MORE LIKE THAT AND HE'LL BE BEDDING AND IT'S BETTER BE SOON! I'VE ONLY GOT A FEW DAYS LEFT BEFORE I GET KICKED OUT!



SHE WATCHED THIS WEALTHY MILVETUAST PULL HIMSELF TOGETHER MANFULLY. SHE LISTENED, SHOCKED, TO THE WORDS HE CAREFULLY ENOUNCED IN A FIRM, ALMOST FORMAL MANNER.

PEARL, I WANT YOU FOR MY WIFE!

WHAT?!



IT WAS WARM THE NEXT EVENING, THERE WAS NO MOON AND THE SNOW HUNG DAMN OVERHEAD. PEARL, COULD GRAB THE DEEP TENSION IN HOWARD AS THEY WALKED HOME. SHE WAITED PATIENTLY. FINALLY, HE STOPPED BENEATH A LAMP POST AND HE GAVE A NEW EASER DETERMINED LOOK IN HIS EYES...

PEARL! I-I-I NEED YOU! I WANT YOU!

OH, HOWARD! IF YOU ONLY KNEW HOW MUCH I NEED YOU!



THIS WAS BEYOND PEARL'S WILDEST DREAMS. HAD SHE HEARD RIGHT? WAS THIS A PROPOSAL? NOW IT WAS PEARL WHO WAS NERVOUS. THIS CHARACTER WAS PLAYING FOR KEEPS. NOT FOR A MONTH, A YEAR, FOREVER. SHE HAD TO ASK HIM AGAIN...

HOWARD, ARE YOU SURE? YOU DON'T KNOW ME!

I KNOW YOU WELL ENOUGH TO WANT YOU FOR MY WIFE, PEARL!





PEARL WAS ECSTATIC, SHE GLOWED IN HER UNHOPED-FOR TRIUMPH, AND WHEN HE ASKED...

WILL YOU COME UP  
TO MY APARTMENT,  
PEARL?  
OH, YES,  
HOW? YES...



THEY WENT UP...HE, HOLDING HER HAND IN A TIGHT FEVERISH GRIP, HIS BREATHING QUICKENED WITH EXCITEMENT...AND SHE, FOLLOWING EAGERLY, ANXIOUS TO CONVINCE HIM OF HIS WISE CHOICE, ANXIOUS TO THANK HIM...



IS HERE...THE  
BEDROOM...  
YES, HOWIE...

HE OPENED THE BEDROOM DOOR AND SHOVED PEARL IN. SHE HEARD THE LOCK CLICK BEHIND HIM...HEARD HIS LOW THROATED SMILE. SHE PEERED INTO THE BLOOM...



ESTHER? I  
BROUGHT ANOTHER  
ONE...  
ESTHER??  
WHO'S SHE?

AND THEN PEARL SAW THE COFFIN IN THE BLOOM - THE OLD COFFIN WITH THE LID SQUEAKING OPEN...THE PALE WHITE FIGURE RISING FROM ITS...BITS OF EARTH CROPPING FROM ITS FLOWING BLACK CAPE...THE RAZOR-SHARP SNAKE-LIKE HANDS...THE BEZING SPITTLE...



MY GOD! WHAT IS IT,  
HOWIE? WHAT IS IT?  
THIS IS MY WIFE,  
PEARL! SHE'S A  
VAMPIRE!

HOWARD PUSHED PEARL TOWARDS THE PROTHING, GRAVING, HIDDEN CREATURE...



I TOLD YOU I WANTED  
YOU FOR MY WIFE!  
NO! NO!  
OH, LORD!

AND HOWARD SAT DOWN AND WATCHED WITH SATISFACTION AS HIS LIVING-DEAD WIFE SPREAD UPON THIS LATEST DESERVING VICTIM HE'D BROUGHT. HE LISTENED EAGERLY TO HER SLUTTIOUS SLUMPING NOISES. HE NODDED APPROVINGLY AS THE PINK GLOW CAME BACK INTO HER SUNKEN CHEEKS, AND PEARL'S WRITHING BODY BECAME PALER AND PALER AND PALER.



SO POOR PEARL FINALLY FOUND HER LAST HUSBAND-SUCKER? ONLY IN ONE CASE, IT WAS THE HUSBAND'S WIFE WHO WAS THE SUCKER... BLOOD-SUCKER, THAT IS! HER, HOW? WELL, THE OLD WITCH TAKES WITH ANOTHER OF HER CREEPY CAULDRON-CONCOCTIONS SO ALL STEP ASIDE WHILE SHE SLURPS SLIME AT YOU. BY THE WAY, I HEAR SOME PEOPLE FINALLY JOINED THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB. THAT'S GOOD NEWS? I WAS BEGINNING TO BE AFRAID THE MEMBERSHIP WAS GOING TO BE LIMITED TO ER... THINGS. SHALL WE SAY? BEEP NOW, PEOPLE TOO? WELL, WHAT'D YA KNOW? BEEP!



# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HIE, HIE! COME IN, CREEPS. YOU'RE IN THE RIGHT PLACE FOR RETCHING... THE HAUNT OF FEAR, AND, *WHY DIDN'T I SAY THAT'S FRENCH, FRIENDS!* HAVE I GOT A REVOLTING TALE FOR YOU, WANT TO KNOW WHAT'S COOKING IN MY GROSSST CAST-IRON CAULDRON? WELL, YOUR OLD WITCH HAS A SOFT BLAS OF BRISBY GAS ABOUT A TERROR TIME AND A FAST OPERATOR WHO BROUGHT A MESSY MATTER TO A HEAD AND CUT IT OFF THERE! SO Wipe the DRUDL FROM YOUR CHINS, SEND YOUR FLOPPY EARS THIS WAY, AND LISTEN TO THIS DELIGHTFUL TALE OF BUTCHERY CALLED...

## The Sliceman Cometh

THAT 10TH OF MARCH, 1756, WAS GRIM AND GREY WITH RAIN THREATENING IN THE DIMMOUS BLACK CLOUDS THAT BILLOWED OVERHEAD. A RAIN WIND HOWLED FURIOUSLY ABOUT THE CRIMSON-STAINED GUILLOTINE, BUT IT COULD NOT CLEAR THE REPULED AIR OF ITS ABATOR AROMA. UNDERFOOTDOOR-STORES WERE SLIPPERY WITH CONGEALING SORE, WHILE FRESH WARM BLOOD BUMBLED IN A CONSTANT FLOW DOWN THE BUTTERS AS THE GREAT BLADE HISSED DOWN AGAIN AND AGAIN, HEAPING THE BASKET WITH WIDE-EYED NOBLE HEADS THERE, CALMLY, STOOD THE MAN OF THE HOUR, THE EXECUTIONER, *ANDRÉ MACHE*, AND THE JEERING, HOOTING, RED-BONNETED CITIZENRY, READING AN URGENT MESSAGE JUST HANDED TO HIM.

"AND IF A THOUSAND GOLD LOUIS INTEREST YOU, THEN VISIT ME AT 48 RUE ORNOU." HMM? *PIERRE*, I MUST LEAVE! CARRY ON FOR ME, JOE!

A PLEASURE, *ANDRÉ*.

AS *ANDRÉ* HURRIED AWAY FROM THE ANGRY SCENE, HIS BLOOD-SEALED SHOES LEAVING RED IMPRINTS ON THE PAVING STONES—HE EAGERLY RE-READ THE NOTE HE'D RECEIVED.

A THOUSAND GOLD LOUIS! SACRÉ BLEU!



SOON, THE EXECUTIONER WAS BOWLED UP INTO A SPACIOUS ROOM OF HIS FINE COUNTRY BY A VENERAL-LOOKING MAN WITH AN UNCTUOUS GRIN ABOUT HIM. . .

AN, M'SIEU VACHE! I AM JEAN COURBEAU. IT IS A GREAT HONOR INDEED TO HAVE SO IMPORTANT AND DISTINGUISHED A VISITOR AS YOU IN MY HOME. . .

YOU MENTIONED SOMETHING ABOUT ONE THOUSAND GOLD LOUIS.

CITIZEN COURBEAU THAT IS WHY I AM HERE.

MAKE YOURSELF COMFORTABLE, WOULD YOU... SOME OF THE FINEST WINE FROM MY CELLAR AND NOW. . . I WILL EXPLAIN WHY I SENT FOR YOU. . .

ACTUALLY, THIS HOUSE IS NOT MINE. IT BELONGS TO MY BROTHER CLAUDE. BEING THE ELDEST, MY FATHER LEFT HIM EVERYTHING. A FORTUNE W'D'OU, SHOULD ANYTHING HAPPEN TO CLAUDE, I'D BET IT ALL. YOU UNDERSTAND?



YOU WANT ME TO RIDE YOU OF YOUR BROTHER, CITIZEN COURBEAU? BARBASTI... YOU INSULT ME. I WOULD MURDER A MAN... EVEN FOR THAT MUCH GOLD?

NOT MURDER, MONSIEUR! MERELY AN ACCUSATION TO THE RIGHT PARTIES. AND THE HEAD OF ANOTHER ROYALIST SYMPATHIZER WOULD ROLL INTO YOUR BASKET.

ALTHOUGH THAT IS A DIFFERENT STORY, M'SIEU COURBEAU. IF YOUR BROTHER IS ONE OF THEM... A ROYALIST... THEN I WILL BE GLAD TO EXPOSE HIM. IT WOULD BE MY DUTY!

YOU ARE A WISE MAN, M'SIEU VACHE. DO NOT THINK I AM NOT FOND OF MY BROTHER. BUT THERE ARE TWO THINGS I LOVE MORE: FRANCE AND MONEY!



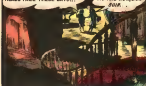
HERE IS HALF THE PAYMENT... 500 GOLD LOUIS. YOU WILL RECEIVE THE REST WHEN I HAVE PROOF THAT MY BROTHER HAS BEEN EXECUTED? SO MANY HEADS FALL THESE DAYS...

YOU SHALL HAVE UNDENIABLE EVIDENCE, CITIZEN COURBEAU. I WILL SEE TO IT! AND NOW, ADVANCE.

AND SO, THAT VERY DAY, ANDRE VACHE MADE HIS ACCUSATION. . .

I HAVE IT FROM HIS OWN BROTHER'S LIPS, CITIZEN VACHE! CLAUDE COURBEAU IS IN FULL SYMPATHY WITH THE NOBILITY, DESPISES THE NEWLY-FORMED REPUBLIC AND WOULD BETRAY IT AT THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY. . .

ORDER THE ARREST OF CLAUDE COURBEAU.



THE NEXT DAY, CITIZEN MARAT AND SIX OTHER JUDGES OF THE COMMUNE LOOKED DOWN COLDLY AND IMPASSIVELY AT THE ACCUSED...



I AM NOT AN ENEMY OF THE REVOLUTION. WHEN AN INNOCENT MAN CAN BE DRAGGED FROM HIS HOME ON THE FLEETEST OF PRETEXTS ACCUSED OF TREASON WITHOUT A SHRED OF EVIDENCE, AND SENT TO THE GUILLOTINE BY SUCH A LAW... THEN THIS IS NOT A TRIAL, BUT WANTON BUTCHERY!

CITIZEN MARAT HELD UP HIS HAND AND A HUSH FELL OVER THE CHAMBER. THEN, SCOWLING DARKLY AT THE ACCUSED, HE WHISPERED...



THIS IS YOUR DEFENSE, MRS. COUSBEAU... THAT WE ARE BUTCHERS BECAUSE WE DESTROY OUR ENEMIES?

HE LOOKED AT HIS FELLOW JUDGES...



WHAT SAY YOU, CITIZENS? WE HAVE THE WORD OF THE EMINENT EXECUTIONER, ANDRÉ VACHE, CITIZEN MARAT! THAT IS GOOD ENOUGH FOR US!

ANDRÉ VACHE LED CLAUDE TO THE MONSTRIOUS MACHINE AS WHITING NEEDLES CLICKED AND THE THROAT JERRED...



SOMEHOW, YOU LYING SOB, JUSTICE WILL BE DONE! YOU DELAY THE PERFORMANCE, W'SIEU. MADAM LA GUILLOTINE MUST NOT BE KEPT WAITING!

THE CHAMBER, THROGGED WITH ANGRY RAISED CITIZENS, SHOOK WITH THE HOARSE CLAMORING FOR STILL ANOTHER HEAD...



HE EVEN SPEAKS LIKE THE NOBILITY!

DEATH! DEATH!

CITIZEN MARAT BARRD HIS HAND AND DROPPED A SQUARE OF BLACK CLOTH. AND WITH THIS SYMBOLIC GESTURE, THE CROWD ROARED ITS APPROVAL...



THE PERDANT CLAUDE COUSBEAU, IS DEATH ON THE GUILLOTINE!

THE RED-BONNETED CROWD WAITED IN TENSE SILENCE AS THE HEAVY RAPE WAS HOISTED HIGH BETWEEN THE SLOTTED PARALLEL BEAMS. THEN, WITH A WHINING CRESCENDO TO ACCOMPANY THE RAZOR-SHARP BLADE'S DESCENT, THE CROWD EXPLODED IN A LUSTY CHEER AS IT HIT... CUTTING THROUGH FLESH AND BONE, SLAMMING INTO THE BLOCK...



ANDRÉ CAUGHT CLAUDE'S HEAD IN A GRASP AS HOT BLOOD SPURTED FROM THE SEVERED VEINS AND ARTERIES OF THE DECAPITATED BODY, SPRAYING HIS FACE AND CLOTHES. HE HELD UP THE HEAD-HEAVY BAG WITH A TRIUMPHANT GRIN. THE CROWD SCREAMED...



HE MOVED THROUGH THE SILENT DESERTED STREETS, HEARING THE CHEERS FROM THE BULLDOZING SQUARE AND THINKING ONLY OF THE GOLD HE HAD EARNED. BEFORE LONG, HE ARRIVED AT 49 RUE DU BOIS.

YOU ASKED FOR PROOF, CITIZEN COURBEAU?

AH... YOU BROUGHT MY BROTHER'S CLOTHES?



ANDRÉ VACHE REACHED INTO THE BAG, PULLED FORTH ITS CONTENTS, AND HELD IT DANCING BY THE HAIR.

BETTER THAN THAT... CHORE... I BROUGHT THIS! LOOK!



JEAN COURBEAU TURNED SICKLY GREEN. HE WHISPERED SOFTLY...

TAKE YOUR MONEY! HERE! HASTY! SET... SET IT OUT OF HORE'S REACH... SET AWAY OF IT!



ANDRÉ WENT LIGHT-HEARTEDLY THROUGH THE EVENING STREETS, THE GOLD JINGLING IN HIS POCKETS, THE BAG SWINGING MERRILY AT HIS SIDE. A COACH RUMBLLED BY, AND HE PLAYFULLY TORSED THE RED-SOAKED BAG THROUGH ITS WINDOW...



THE COACH STOPPED. A TALL MAN GOT OUT AND CARRIED THE GOATY RUMBLE BACK TO ANDRÉ...

DO YOU TAKE OUR REVOLT SO LIGHTLY THAT IT AMUSES YOU TO THROW ABOUT THE HEAD OF AN ENEMY?

TAKE CARE, CITIZEN! YOU SPEAK TO VACHE, MASTER OF THE BULLDOZING!



THE MAN HURLED ANDRÉ THE BAG...

AND I, CITIZEN VACHE, AM MASTER OF FRANCE FROM SAND PARDONS, YOUR EXCELLENCY!



THE COACH RUMBLLED OFF AND ANDRÉ WALKED ON, DETERMINED TO RID HIMSELF OF THE HEAD. AS HE CROSSED ONE OF THE SEINE BRIDGES, HE TORSED IT OVER THE PARAPET...



ANDRE DID NOT SEE THE SACK LAND IN THE BOTTOM OF A BOAT THAT CAME FROM UNDER THE BRIDGE AND THE HEAD ROLLED OUT AND THE FISHERMEN GASPED.



HOW DO YOU WANT WHAT KIND OF FRENCH JOKE IS THIS?

LOOK! IT IS VAGNE, THE EXECUTIONER!

I WAS IN THE SQUARE WHEN HE GOT THIS HEAD TODAY, HEARD HE HELD IT UP FOR ALL TO SEE. HE WAS VERY PROUD OF IT! IT MUST HAVE BEEN SOMEONE VERY SPECIAL!



THEN HE DROPPED IT ACCIDENTALLY! COME, EDWARD, WE WILL PUT OURSELVES IN GOOD WITH HIM BY RETURNING IT!

WHEN ANDRE RETURNED TO HIS ROOMING HOUSE, HE WAS GREETED BY HIS LANDLADY, MADAME BARRETTE...



TWO CITIZENS LEFT JUNE FOR YOU, MRSU VAGNE!

NO! NO! IT IS IMPOSSIBLE!

ANDRE HURRIED OUT INTO THE STREET WITH THE BLOOD-SOAKED BAG. HE STOPPED OVER A SEWER-GRATE...



OH, ANNE, CLAUDE COURBEAU! SO THEY PLAY GAMES WITH US! WELL, PERHAPS THE RATS DOWN THERE WILL FIND YOU TEMPTING...

THE HEAD DROPPED TO ANDRE'S FEET AS IT TORE THROUGH THE SACK'S BLOOD-ROTTED BOTTOM. THE CLOTH DISAPPEARED INTO THE GARB-REeking DARKNESS. ANDRE HESITATED, STUPIDLY, AS AN OCREAT, HEAPED WITH HEADLESS CORPSES, ROUNDED THE CORNER...



VAGNE! IT IS GOOD TO SEE YOUR LOOKING-GORGONIZE SOME OF YOUR CUSTOMERS?

TAKE THEM AWAY, BOON! GO BURY THEM!

ANDRE STOOD OVER THE GRIMMING HEAD, HIDING IT FROM THE CART-DRIVER'S VIEW...



I'M IN NO HURRY VAGNE. LET US STOP FOR A GRIM! OUR HEADLESS FRIENDS CAN WAIT!

LET ME ALONE, BOON! GO BURY YOUR FOUL-SMELLING DEAD!

BOON SHRUGGED AND THE CART RUMBLING OFF. ANDRE TURNED TO THE HEAD, ANGRY AND FRUSTRATED. HE REACHED FOR IT SAVAGELY...



TORMENT ME, WILL YOU, CLAUDE COURBEAU! WELL, WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT!

THE EXECUTIONER CAME UPON A MARKET OPEN LATE AND LIT DIMLY BY OIL LAMPS. HE PASSED THE STALLS OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES AND SMILED AT THE JOKE HE MADE...



FREE AT LAST OF HIS PAINFUL BURDEN, ANDRÉ CELEBRATED HIS NEW-FOUND FORTUNE AT AN INN WITH A GLASS OF BRANDY. THEN HE RETURNED HOME AND, MEETING HIS LANDLADY, GOOD-NATUREDLY RELIEVED HER OF HER SHOPPING BASKET...



THEY ENTERED THE ROOMING HOUSE TOGETHER AND WENT INTO THE KITCHEN.



CLAUDE COURBEN'S HEAD GRINNED UP AT ANDRÉ FROM AMONG THE VEGETABLES MADAME BARETTE UNLIFTED OUT ONTO THE KITCHEN TABLE...



THE LANDLADY MOANED AND TURNED AWAY, SIDE ANDRÉ, SHAKING UNCONTROLLABLY, FLUNG OPEN THE SHUTTERS AND THREW THE BARBICOLE-LIKE SKULL INTO THE DARK STREET BELOW...



A MOMENT LATER, MONSIEUR ETIENNE, ANOTHER BOMBER, ENTERED... ON HIS DOUR FACE, A LOOK MORE OF PATHOS THAN ANGER... IN HIS HAND, THE HEAD...



ANDRÉ PUNED, THE BLOOD DRAINING FROM HIS FACE. HE SEIZED A CLEAVER FROM THE TABLE, THEN TURNED AND SWATHED THE HEAD FROM MONSIEUR ETIENNE.



ANDRÉ STUMBLED TO HIS ROOM AND WITH A RAGE THAT VIBRATED IN MADNESS, HE KNOCKED ON THE FLOOR AND KICKED AT THE LIFELESS FLUSH AND BOHE UNTIL HE'D REDUCED IT INTO AN UNRECOGNIZABLE HEAP OF WRECK—WRECK!



NOW, LET'S SEE YOU COME BACK! NOW! NOW!

THEN, WEAK AND EXHAUSTED, HIS INTERIORS ROLLING AND GULVERING LIKE JELLY, THE EXECUTIONER SANK ON HIS BED IN A COMA-LIKE STUPOR.



SOS... SOS...

AN HOUR PASSED. PARIS WAS ASLEEP. THE NIGHT WAS STILL EXCEPT FOR AN OX-CART THAT RUMBLLED BY BELOW. ANDRÉ STIRRED AT ITS NOISE AND SAT UP, HE LISTENED TO THE FRONT DOOR OPEN, THE HEAVY DRAGGING FOOTSTEPS ON THE STAIRS... THE KNOCK OF HIS OWN DOOR TURN... AND THEN...



GOURBEAU!

THE HEADLESS CORPSE STUMBLED TOWARD ANDRÉ, ITS HAND DESTIGULATING TOWARD ITS NECK, POINTING...



YOUR HEAD? YOU'VE COME FOR YOUR HEAD? OH, LORD, NO! I—I CAN'T GIVE IT TO YOU! THERE... ON THE FLOOR... THERE IS WHAT'S LEFT OF IT.

THE DECAPITATED BODY HESITATED, AS IF BEMODERED AS TO WHAT TO DO. THEN IT CRASSED FORWARD AGAIN... REACHING FOR ANDRÉ... REACHING... REACHING...



NO! NO! KEEP AWAY-Y-Y-Y-Y-Y-Y...

MAIGNE BARITTE HEARD THE EAR-SPLITTING SCREAM THAT ECHOED THROUGH HER ROOMING HOUSE AND RUSHED TO ANDRÉ'S ROOM WITH A CANDLE. BUT AS SHE REACHED THE DOOR, IT OPENED, THE BODY OF CLAUDE GOURBEAU STUMBLED OUT, AND ON ITS SHOULDERS, CRIMSON DRIPPING FROM ITS TORN AND RUPTURED BLOOD VESSELS, SAT THE SAKRILEGIOUS TORN-OFF HEAD OF ANDRÉ VACHE.



CHOKE...

HIE, HIE! WELL, THAT'S ONE WAY TO GET AHEAD IN THE HORROR-EXCITORIES! AND NOW, IT'S TIME TO GHOST LK'S MUCK-WAD FOR THIS ISSUE! HOPE YOU WON'T BORED STIFF! WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN THE VAULT OF HORROR... WHEN WE'LL BE HEADING



BACK YOUR WAY WITH MORE TOP HORROR YARN! TILL THEN, THINK ABOUT JOINING THE E.G. FAN-ARNDT CLUB! DON'T BE A SUCKER AND DO IT! JUST THINK ABOUT IT!



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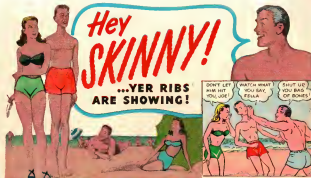
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# TALES FROM THE CRYPT

FEATURING...



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER



WICK'S  
DOWNS



# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH! MENACE, MYHONEY! FINEY! YOU'VE COME TO THE RIGHT CREEP-COUST, 'CAUSE THAT'S MY RACKET! AH, YOUR OLD CRYPT-KEEPER IS JUST FLOWING WITH FRIGHT TODAY. NOW ABOUT GOING FOR A RACKET I'LL DRIVE YOU NUTS. READY? THEN WITHOUT FURTHER HOO, I'LL START OFF MY MORBID MAD WITH AN ISLET ISLAND STORY OF A STARVING SAILOR AND A RAVENOUS RAT. I CALL THIS HIDEOUSLY HORRIBLE HUNK OF HISTORY. . .

## TELESCOPE



THE S.S. GRAMWELL WAS NO MATCH FOR THE VIOLENT SOUTH SEA TEMPEST. THE MIGHTY WIND RULLED HER UPON A REEF AND SHE POUNDERED IN EIGHT FATHOMS OF BRINY BLUE. SOON, THE STORM WAS SPENT, THE SHIP GONE, AND THERE REMAINED BUT ONE HUMAN SURVIVOR...A SEAMAN...ERIC WALFORD. HE CLUNG DESPERATELY TO A FLOATING PLANK TILL IT REACHED THE SHALLOWS OFF A SMALL CORAL ISLE. THEN, HALF-CONSCIOUS, HE CRAWLED TO THE SANDY SHORE. . .



BUT ERIC WAS NOT THE ONLY SURVIVOR. A RAT... HALF-GROWNED AND FRIGHTENED... HAD CLUNG TO THE OTHER END OF THE SAME PLANK. AND NOW IT TOO, STRUGGLED ASHORE.



THE RAT AND THE MAN WERE THE ONLY LIFE ON THIS DESERT ISLE. NOT A TREE... NOT A PLANT... NOT A BLADE OF GRASS. EVEN ON THIS SHARPER CORAL ROCK, IT WAS FINE ACRES OF NOTHING...



FOR A LONG TIME, ERIC LAY IN THE BLISTERING SUN, EXHAUSTED. THEN, FEELING A TERRIBLE THIRST, HE BOUGHT OUT AND FOUND A SMALL PUDDLE LEFT BY THE STORM IN A SHALLOW DEPRESSION ON TOP OF A CORAL ROCK. HE DRANK BREEDERLY...



WHEN HE HAD SLACKED HIS THIRST, ERIC LOOKED UP SUDDENLY, SENSING THAT HE WAS BEING WATCHED. HE STARTED, HIS THROAT CACKED WITH A RIDING SCORGE. THE GREATER GREY SHIP'S RAT WAS WATCHING HIM WITH IT'S READY GLITTERING EYES...



ERIC BACKED AWAY, THE RAT SCURRED FORWARD TO THE TINY POOL AND DRANK. ERIC'S FACE WENT WHY WITH DISGUST...



THE CASTAWAYS... THE MAN AND THE RAT... KEPT SOME DISTANCE APART. AND YET, THEY SHARED A COMMON LONELINESS. EACH FOUND AT LEAST A LITTLE COMFORT IN SEEING THE OTHER NEAR...



THOROUGHLY EXHAUSTED, BOTH SLEPT THE NIGHT THROUGH. IT WASN'T UNTIL THEY AWOKED THE FOLLOWING MORNING THAT THEY FELT THE FIRST SHARP PAINS OF HUNGER. ERIC SEARCHED THE ENTIRE BEACH...



THE RAT, TOO, SNIPPED EVERY INCH OF THE ISLAND BUT FOUND NOTHING TO SATISFY ITS GROWING APPETITE. SOON, THE MAN AND THE RAT FACES EACH OTHER WITH A DIFFERENT LOOK IN THEIR EYES: A HUNGRY LOOK.



THAT DAY, HUNGER SHAWED AT THE SURVIVORS' INWARDS, AND WHEN NIGHT CAME AGAIN, ERIC SLEPT RESTLESSLY. SUDDENLY, HE SAT UP WITH A START...



SOMETHING'S HEAR ME...  
WATCHING ME.

IN THE BRIGHT MOONLIGHT THAT BATHED THE ISLAND, ERIC SAW THE RAT... TEN FEET AWAY... STARING AT HIM... STARING GREEDILY, HE SHUDDERED...



GET AWAY FROM ME, YOU  
FLA-ROOEN VERMIN!

THE DARK-GREY ROBBENT DREW BACK ITS LIPS IN A FIERCE GRIN. THE SEAWARD SEAMAN HURLED A HANDFUL OF SAND AT IT...



FILTHY DEVIL!

THE RAT FLED. ERIC SLEPT NO MORE THAT NIGHT AND HIS VIGILANCE WAS REWARDED. SEVERAL TIMES THE RAT CAME CLOSE.



HAVE A CARE, MY SHEARIN' LITTLE  
FRIEND... BY TOMORROW, I MAY BE  
LESS PARTICULAR WHAT I  
EAT MYSELF!

THE NEXT MORNING, ERIC SAW HIS SOLE LIVING COMPANION SLUTTING ITSELF ON DRY SEABEED THAT HAD BEEN WASHED ASHORE. THE SEAMAN SWALLOWED A MOUTHFUL, THEN, HE AND THE RAT ABSCQUITATED THE FOUL NESS AT THE SAME TIME...



DOOHN! I... SHORE... I COULD NEVER  
HELP THAT SLIME DOWN.

ERIC'S MOUTH AND THROAT WERE DRIER THAN-EVEN NOW. HIS LIPS WERE FURCHED AND CRACKED. HIS HUNGER PAINED HIM. IT WAS LATER THAT SAME MORNING THAT SEVERAL OUTRIGGER BOATS APPEARED OFFSHORE... MANNED BY NATIVES FISHING WITH NETS. ERIC SHOUTED HOARSELY AT THEM AND WAVED HIS ARMS.



HELP! HELP! FOR GOD'S SAKE, GET  
ME OFF THIS CURSED CHUNK OF HADES!



THERE WAS A SUDDEN FLURRY OF EXCITEMENT AMONG THE NATIVE FISH-ERMEN... MUCH CHATTERING AND POINTING AT THE LONELY FIGURE ON THE BEACH...



WITH FEAR IN THEIR EYES FOR "THE ISLAND DEVIL," THEY FEWER-ONLY HAULED IN THEIR NETS...



...AND PADDLED SWIFTLY AWAY, LEAVING ERIC WITH NOTHING BEFORE HIM BUT THE BROAD EXpanse OF TORQUOISE SEA. NUMB WITH DIS-APPOINTMENT, HE SANK TO THE SAND...



FINALLY, HIS THIRST COMPELLING HIM, ERIC CRAWLED BACK TO THE CORAL ROCK TO DRINK FROM THE TINY POOL, NO LONGER CARING THAT THE RAT HAD DRUNK THERE TOO...



THE RAT, TOO, CAME TO INVESTIGATE THE DRIED-UP DE-PRESSION. ERIC HURLED A ROCK AT IT... ANGRILY... DESPERATELY. HE MISSED...



TOO WEAR TO PURSUE HIS PREY, ERIC STOOD CROAKING AFTER THE RAT AS IT CRAWLED AWAY...



THAT AFTERNOON, A SMALL SEA BIRD SOARED OVERHEAD, CROPPING A FISH FROM ITS BEAK. AS THE BIRD SWOOPED TO RECOVER ITS PREY, ERIC FLUNG A ROCK AT IT WITH ALL OF HIS REMAINING STRENGTH...



THEN, ERIC SLUMPED NEARLY TO THE HOT WHITE SAND...

THE BIRD LAY DEAD NEAR THE WATER'S EDGE WITH ITS HALF-SWALLOWED MORSEL. ERIC SUFFERED A PLEASURABLE AGONY AS HE INCHED TOWARD HIS BUTTING BEAST.



BUT THE OTHER CASTERAW SAW THIS PLUMP FEATHERED PRIDE AND, DRIVEN BY THE MADDENING PAINS OF HUNGER IN ITS BELLY, THE RAT, TOO, CRAWLED WEARILY TOWARD THE FALLEN GULL.



NOW ERIC SAW THE RAT, AND THE RAT SAW ERIC, EACH STRAINED MOVEMENT BENEATH THAT FLESH-ROASTING SUN WAS A TORMENT FOR BOTH CREATURES. THE MAN, THE RAT... AND ERIC WENT TO SEE HIS GRIZZLED RIVAL MOVE AHEAD OF HIM.



GET AWAY, BLAST YOU!  
NO! NO...

THE RAT WAS THERE NOW, NOT TAKING THE TIME TO SNIFF OR TEAR AT ITS FOOD, BUT GULPING AT THE BIRD, SWALLOWING IT WHOLE.



NO! OH, LORD...

AND AT THE SAME TIME, ERIC HAD CLOSED THE GAP SO THAT THERE WAS BUT A SHORT YARD BETWEEN THEM. WITH ENORMOUS EFFORT, ERIC RAISED HIMSELF, THEN FELL FORWARD, TRYING TO CATCH HIS ENEMY.



NOW I'VE GOT YOU.

FINDING STRENGTH IN FEAR, THE RAT LEAPED ASIDE, SO THAT ERIC'S FINGERS JUST BRUSHED ITS SHORT-HAIRED GRISLY FUR.



I... I... CAN'T SOB...  
CAN'T GO ON...

FOR A LONG TIME THE MAN AND THE RAT LAY PROSE ON THE STEAMING SAND, EACH STUDING THE OTHER'S EYES, AND THEN ERIC SPOKE...

IT'S YOU OR ME! I GET YOU... NOW... OR YOU'LL WAIT TILL I'M TOO WEAK TO MOVE!

THE FARMISHED BEGEMAN STRUGGLED TO HIS KNEES, REDDING HIS BLOW CREEPING PURPLE. THE RAT NODDED AWAY WEARILY...

THEN YOU'LL EAT OUT MY EYEBALLS AND THE FLESH OFF MY FACE! YOU'LL RAT SLOW SO I'LL LAST...

THERE WAS NO TIME FOR THE RAT TO SWALLOW IT'S STILL WARM BIRD, LEAVING TINY THREE-PRONGED MARKS IN THE WET SAND. IT BACKED SLIDELY INTO THE SEA...

WELL, IT'S NOT GONNA F'RE ME IF IT'S GONNA BE YOU!

THE RAT TURNED IN THE WATER, NOT GIVING UP ITS PREY, AND STARTED SWIMMING FROM THE ISLAND. ERIC, CRAWLED INTO THE WATER AFTER IT, SWIMMING WITH LIMPLY CHOURING APMS...

GREEDILY HOLDING ITS BULGING MOUTHFUL, THE RAT LOST BREATH... SWALLOWED WATER THROUGH ITS NOSTRILS... BEGAN TO SINK. THE MAN REACHED OUT AND SAVED THE DROWNING RAT...

...SAVED IT FOR HIMSELF! HUNGRY AND WITH HUNGER, NOT WAITING TO RETURN TO SHORE WITH HIS STRANDED PRIZE, THE MAN STUFFED THE WATER-BLOATED RAT INTO HIS MOUTH, TAIL FIRST...

AT THAT VERY MOMENT, A SLEEK BLACK FIN CUT ITS WAY THROUGH THE BLUE, SLIDING SHIFTLY AND SILENTLY TOWARD ITS FLOATING HUMAN GAMBIT...



THE GREAT HUNGRY SHARK CLOSED IN WITH HUGE JAWS AWAPE, THE DOUBLE ROW OF RIPSAW TEETH READY AND EAGER TO TEAR. IT CAME UP BEHIND ERIC...



A VIOLENT TURBULENCE FOLLOWED... A THRASHING AND A SPLASHING OF FOAMY BRINE. THE NATIVE OUTRIGGERS APPEARED THEN, BRAWNY ARMS RHYTHMICALLY THRUSTING PADDLES...



THEY'D RETURNED WITH THEIR CHIEF TO WORSHIP THE ISLAND GOD. INSTEAD, THEY SAW THE VICIOUS TIGER OF THE SEA. THE POWERFUL POLYNESIANS SHAKED UP SHORT, SHARP SAFFS. ONE NATIVE KNELT, HIS SPEAR POISED... THEN LET IT FLY...



HE STRUCK THE SPINTE SQUARELY... UNDER THE SPINE. THERE FOLLOWED A FURIOUS THRASHING AS THE OTHERS HOOKED THEIR SAFFS INTO THE WOUNDED KILLER SHARK AND HEAVED IT ONBOARD AND STOOD SAYING:



...GAWKING AT THE STILL, DEAD GEMMEN OF THE DEEP, FOR STOKING OUT OF ITS TOOTH-LINED MOUTH WAS THE UNBRAWLED HEAD OF ERIC WALFORD... AND OUT OF ERIC'S MOUTH, THE HEAD OF THE BEAST-EYED RAT... AND OUT OF THE RAT'S MOUTH, THE HULL'S HEAD... AND OUT OF THE MOUTH OF THE HULL PROTRUDED THE HEAD OF THE TINY FISH.



HEH, HEH! SO NONE OF THEM GUYTE FINISHED THEIR MEAL, EH, KIDDEST? WELL, LEARN A LESSON FROM THIS LITTLE SCREAM-STORY! NEVER BITE OFF MORE THAN YOU CAN SWALLOW! SOMEBODY MIGHT GET AHEAD OF YOU. AND NOW THAT THE PETRIFYING PAGE HAS BEEN SET, THE VAULT-KEEPER UNRAVELS WITH HIS TELL-TALE... A NIGHTMARISH TALE OF MARACAL MURDER. I'LL DO YOU LATER WITH ANOTHER GRAVE TALE OF TERROR. TILL THEN, LET ME



LEAVE YOU WITH THIS MORBID THOUGHT. DON'T COUNT YOUR GAYNES UNTIL THEY'RE MAFONATED! HEY! NOW!

## SAGAS OF THE SEA, SHIPS, PLUNDER AND...



# PIRACY



BUT IF YOU CAN'T FIND **PIRACY**  
AT YOUR LOCAL NEWSSTAND, YOU  
CAN **SUBSCRIBE!** JUST FILL OUT  
THE COUPON AND MAIL, TOGETHER  
WITH **ONE HUNDRED PIECES OF  
CENT** (THAT'S ONE DUCK, LAND-  
LUBBERS!) TO:

5146 THE JOURNAL OF CLIMATE

10

HERE'S A DELIGHTFUL SAMPLE  
OF ESCAPE LITERATURE CALLED...

# THE SUBSTITUTE



FOR SEVEN LONG YEARS, HENRI DUVAL HAD SUFFERED THE EQUATORIAL HEAT AND THE BLAZING SUN AND THE TORTURED LABORS OF THE FRENCH PENAL COLONY... AND ALL BECAUSE HE'D POISONED THE HUSBAND OF THE WOMAN HE'D LOVED. FOR SEVEN LONG YEARS, HE'D SWEATED AND SLAVED AT THE IMPOSSIBLE TASK OF HACKING CLEARINGS INTO THAT JUNGLE ISLAND, AN IMPOSSIBLE TASK, FOR SO SOONER HAD A TRACT BEEN CLEARED THAN THE RELENTLESS TROPICAL OVERGROWTH CLOSED IN AGAIN LIKE A SNAKE TIE. BUT THIS WAS THE PUNISHMENT FOR MURDER AND HENRI WAS FORCED TO UNDERGO ITS MISERY, LEFT ONLY TO DREAM OF COOL PARS AND COOL WINE AND THE COOL LIPS OF A WOMAN. AND THEN, ONE DAY, HE DISCOVERED THE HERB...

"SACRÉ DIEU! IT IS HELLBORE!"



HENRI WAS AN EXPERT ON POISONS, AND HE KNEW HELLBORE... THE HERB WITH THE ROOT STOCK THAT YIELDED THE POISONOUS BLOSSOMS. HELLBORE! HE IMMEDIATELY RECOGNIZED THE PLANT AND TONED IT FROM THE SPONGY JUNGLE FLOOR, STUFFING THE SHORT ROOTS INTO HIS BLOUSE...

"HEY, YOU! DUVAL! KEEP THAT MACHETE GOING!"



WHEN THE BLAZING EQUATORIAL SUN HAD DUNK INTO THE WESTERN SKY AND THE EXHAUSTED REDHAIRIED PRISONERS HAD BEEN MARCHED BACK INTO THE PENAL COLONY COMPOUND, HENRI DUVAL HAD MADE HIS PLANS...

"THEY BRAG THAT NO ONE HAS EVER ESCAPED FROM THIS ISLAND PURGATORY WELL... I... HENRI DUVAL... WILL BE THE FIRST!"



HENRI HID THE KILLERBEE ROOTS IN HIS CRAWLING MATTRESS, AND THE NEXT DAY BEGAN TO GATHER THE THINGS HE NEEDED. WHEN THE GUARD AND HIS CREW WERE AGAIN MARCHED OUT INTO THE STEAMING JUNGLE, HE CHASED JUST THE RIGHT SIZE BAMBOO STALK.



CAREFULLY HE GATHERED JUST THE RIGHT SHAPE PALM FRONDS.



AND WHEN THE GUARD WENT LOOKING, HE HADGED JUST THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF CORN BARK.



THERE HE HID IN HIS SHIRT, AND THAT EVENING SUCCESSFULLY SMUGGLED THEM INTO THE COMPOUND. LATE THAT NIGHT, WHEN THE OTHER PRISONERS WERE ASLEEP, HENRI WORKED. WITH THE KNIFE HE'D STOLEN FROM THE MESS HALL, HE CAREFULLY CARVED THE CURVE OF CORN BARK INTO A SMOOTH, ROUND, FEARDROP SHAPE.



SLITTING THE ELONGATED END, HE INSERTED THE CORRECTLY SHAPED PALM FRONDS, TRIMMING THEM DOWN...



NEXT, INTO THE BULBOUS END OF THE CORN TEARDROP, HE INSERTED THE NEEDLE HE'D TAKEN FROM A FELLOW PRISONER'S SEWING KIT...



AND... POKE!... HENRI HAD FASHIONED AN APPROPRIATE DART... A DART THAT WOULD BE POISONED.



... AND BLOWN THROUGH THE HOLLOW BAMBOO STALK HE'D CUT...



ALL THAT NIGHT, HERRI PRACTISED WITH HIS BLOW-  
GUN UNTIL HIS AIM WAS DEADLY...



FINALLY, HE HID HIS MURDEROUS WEAPON, ALONG WITH THE  
HELLEBORE ROOTS, IN HIS MATTRESS... AND LAY DOWN FOR  
THE FEW HOURS OF SLEEP LEFT TO HIM...



THE NEXT DAY, HERRI FOUND TWO  
FLAT ROCKS AND BRUSHED THEM  
BACK INTO THE COMPOUND AS HE  
HAD DONE WITH THE OTHER THINGS...



THAT NIGHT, HE BROKED DOWN  
THE HELLEBORE ROOTS, CARE-  
FULLY CATCHING THE JUICE THAT  
RAN FROM THE PULVERIZED MEAT  
IN A TIN CUP...



THEN HE DIPPED HIS DART-NEEDLE  
INTO THE AWKWARD TOXIC POISON...



AND THE NEXT MORNING, AS THE GOVERNOR OF THE  
PENAL COLONY STRODE ACROSS THE COMPOUND'S  
GROUNDS ON HIS DAILY CONSTITUTIONAL, HERRI TOOK  
CAREFUL AIM...



...AND LET FLY HIS LETHAL MISSILE...





BY NIGHTFALL, THE GOVERNOR WAS DEAD...



... AND A POOR UNFORTUNATE PRISONER, IN WHOSE MATTRESS THE BLOW-GUN WAS FOUND, WAS WHIPPED TO DEATH - VAINLY PROTESTING HIS INNOCENCE TO THE LAST.



HENRI, ALONG WITH TWO OTHER PRISONERS, WAS LUCKILY ASSIGNED THE JOB OF BUILDING THE COFFIN IN WHICH THE DEMISED GOVERNOR'S BODY WOULD BE KEPT UNTIL THE ARRIVAL OF THE MONTHLY BOAT FROM THE CONTINENT.



THE GOVERNOR HAD BEEN A FAMOUS FRENCH NAVAL HERO, HENRI HAD PLANNED IT ALL! HE'D KNOWN THAT THE GOVERNOR'S BODY WOULD BE SHIPPED BACK TO FRANCE, HE'D COUNTED ON IT. THIS WAS HENRI DUVAL'S PLOT! THIS WAS THE MEANS FOR HIS ESCAPE.

AIR HOLES? WHY, HENRI? THE CORPSED ONCE IS DEAD! WHY DOES HE NEED AIR HOLES IN HIS COFFIN?

TO ALLOW FOR EXPANDING GASES, NOW AM I?



THE NIGHT BEFORE THE MONTHLY STEAMER'S EXPECTED ARRIVAL, HENRI SLIPPED FROM HIS BARRACKS AND HURRIED TO THE CHAPEL, WHERE THE GOVERNOR'S BODY LAY IN STATE IN THE CRUDE COFFIN.



HIS STRIPPED THE BODY OF ITS CLOTHES AND DRESSED IT IN HIS GRIMY PRISON UNIFORM.



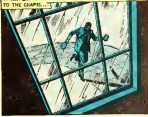
THEN HE SLASHED AND HACKED THE FACE UNTIL IT WAS UNRECOGNIZABLE.



IN THE MORNING THEY WOULD FIND THE BODY AND THINK THAT AN **ENEMY OF HENRI DUBOIS** HAD **ATTACKED AND MURDERED** HIM DURING THE NIGHT. HENRI CARRIED THE DISFIGURED CORPSE INTO THE BAR-  
RACKS AND PLACED IT QUIETLY ON HIS COT...



THEN HE TOOK THE **FOOD** HE'D HIDDEN AND THE CAN OF **WATER** AND HURRIED BACK ACROSS THE COMPOUND TO THE CHAPEL...



...AND CLIMBED INTO THE RECENTLY VACATED COFFIN TO WAIT... TO WAIT FOR THEM TO COME AND CARRY HIM TO THE WRITING BOAT AND EVENTUAL FREEDOM...



THE NEXT MORNING FOOTSTEPS APPROACHED, AND SUDDENLY HENRI HEARD POUNDING AND HAMMERING...



*SACRE DIEUX! THEY ARE  
NAILING ME IN!*

AT FIRST HENRI WAS TERRORIZED... BUT THEN HE CALMED DOWN AS HE REALIZED...

*RIGHT! WHEN I GET TO FRANCE,  
I WILL CERTAINLY HAVE AN OPPOR-  
TUNITY TO FREE MYSELF!  
IT IS NOTHING!*



HAPPILY, HENRI FELT HIS COFFIN LIFTED AND CARRIED OUT OF THE CHAPEL, ACROSS THE COMPOUND, DOWN TO THE PENAL COLONY'S WHARF...



...AND UP THE GANGPLANK OF THE SUPPLY SHIP...



HE LISTENED WITH RAGE TO THE SQUEAK OF THE LUGGERS WHISTLE, THE MUFFLED ROAR OF ITS ENGINES. HE FELT THE GENTLE HEAVING AS THE SHIP BACKED OFF FROM THE PIER AND HEADED INTO THE OPEN SEA...



HE CALCULATED THE APPROXIMATE LENGTH OF THE VOYAGE AND REALIZED THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO PUT HIMSELF ON A STRICT RATIONING PROGRAM TO MAKE HIS MEAGER FOOD SUPPLY LAST. IT WAS HOURS LATER BEFORE HE AFFORDED HIMSELF HIS FIRST MORSEL WASHED DOWN BY ONE DULP OF THE TROPIC WATERS.



AND THAT NIGHT, THE RUMMING SHIP'S ENGINE LULLED HENRI INTO A PEACEFUL SLEEP...



BUT HE WAS AWAKENED RUDELY THE NEXT MORNING AS THE COFFIN WAS LIFTED BRUSQUELY AND CARRIED ON DECK...



HE LISTENED AS THE ENGINES STOPPED AND ONLY THE GENTLE LAPPING OF THE OCEAN WAVES DRIFTED THROUGH THE CONVENIENT AIR HOLES. AND THEN HE HEARD THE CAPTAIN'S VOICE, ORDERING...

...AND SO, IN COMPLIANCE WITH GOVERNOR MOLLENT'S LAST REQUEST...



HENRI'S BLOOD FROZE IN HIS VEINS AS HE FELT THE COFFIN LIFTED TO THE SHIP'S BAIL AND SLID FORWARD...OVER IT...

WE COMMIT THE COFFIN CONTAINING HIS BODY TO THE DEEP...FOR BURIAL AT SEA...



HENRI'S SCREAM WAS CUT SHORT AS THE COFFIN HIT THE TOSSEING BRINE AND WATER ROULED IN THROUGH THE AIR HOLES, FILLING HIS FINE PRISON, FILLING HIS BLUE-BERING MOUTH...FILLING HIS GASPING LUNGS...



# A SPECIAL EDITORIAL

## THIS IS AN APPEAL FOR ACTION!

**THE PROBLEM:** Comics are under fire . . . horror and crime comics in particular. Due to the efforts of various "do-gooders" and "do-gooder" groups, a large segment of the public is being led to believe that certain comic magazines cause juvenile delinquency, warp the minds of America's youth, and affect the development of the personalities of those who read them! Among these "do-gooders" are: a psychiatrist who has made a lucrative career of attacking comic magazines, certain publishing companies who do not publish comics and who would benefit by their demise, many groups of adults who would like to blame their lack of ability as responsible parents on comic magazines blamed of on themselves, and various assorted headline hunters. These people are myriads. They complain to local police officials, to local magazine retailers, to local wholesalers, add to their complaints. They complain and complain and threaten and threaten. Eventually, everyone gets frightened. The newsdealer gets frightened. He removes the books from display. The wholesaler gets frightened. He refuses shipments. The congressman gets frightened. . . November is coming! They start an investigation. This wave of hysteria has seriously threatened the very existence of the whole comic magazine industry.

**WE BELIEVE:** Your editors sincerely believe that the claim of these crusaders . . . that comics are bad for children . . . is nonsense. If we, in the slightest way, thought that horror comics, crime comics, or any other kind of comics were harmful to our readers, we would cease publishing them and direct our efforts toward something else!

And we're not alone in our belief. For example: Dr. David Abrahamson, eminent criminologist, in his book, "Who Are The Guilty?" says, "Comic books do not lead to crime, although they have been widely blamed for it . . . In my experience as a psychiatrist, I cannot remember having seen one boy or girl who has committed a crime, or who became neurotic or psychotic . . . because he or she read comic books." A group led by Dr. Freds Kefauver, Menard Health Chairman of the 81st Congress of the P. T. A., decided that living room violence has "a decided beneficial effect on young minds." Dr. Robert M. Felix, director of the National Institute of Mental Health, said that horror comic books do not originate criminal behavior in children . . . in a way, the horror comics may do some good . . . children may use fantasy, as stimulated by the "comics" as a means of working out natural feelings of aggression.

We also believe that a large portion of our total readership of horror and crime comics is made up of adults. We believe that those who oppose comics are a small minority. Yet this minority is causing the hysteria. The voice of the majority . . . you who buy comics, read them, enjoy them, and are not harmed by them . . . has not been heard!

**WHAT YOU MUST DO:** Unless you act now, the pressure from this minority may force comics from the American scene. It is members of this minority who threaten the local retailers, who threaten the local wholesalers, who have sent letters to the Senate Subcommittee on Juvenile Delinquency (now investigating the comic industry).

**IT IS TIME THAT THE MAJORITY'S VOICE BE HEARD!**

It is time that the Senate Subcommittee hears from YOU . . . each and every one of you!

If you agree that comics are harmless entertainment, write a letter to a postcard **TODAY!** to:

The Senate Subcommittee on Juvenile Delinquency  
United States Senate  
Washington 25, D. C.

and in your own words, tell them to: **Make it a new, polite letter!** In the case of you younger readers, it would be more effective if you could get your parents to write for you, or perhaps add a P.S. to your letter, as the Senate Subcommittee may not have much respect for the opinions of minors.

Of course, if you or your parents *disagree* with us, and believe that comics **ARE** bad, let your sentiments be known on that too! The important thing is that the Subcommittee hear from actual comic book readers and/or their parents, rather than from people who never read a comic magazine in their lives, but simply want to destroy them.

It is also important that your local newsdealer be encouraged to continue carrying, displaying, and selling all kinds of comics. Speak to him. Have him speak to his wholesaler.

Wherever you can, let your voice and the voices of your parents be heard in protest over the campaign against comics.

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Your grateful editors  
(for the whole E. C. Gang)

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## SQUEEZE PLAY

From the place where he crouched on the metal ladder leading down into the open manhole, Ben Flint's eyes were exactly level with the surface of the street. Gripping the steel rails, Flint leaned forward to scan the paving crew hard at work nearby, spreading hot tar over the road bed. *He'll be here in a minute*, Flint thought to himself, his stomach muscles tightening with nervous expectation. *As soon as the lousy rat rolls up I'm gonna let 'im have it right between the eyes!*

Steam boiled up from the hot tar, while the workmen spread it swiftly . . . Flint's eyes narrowed to keep the top of the steep road in sight. A rumbling noise was heard off in the distance: Flint's right hand tightened spasmodically on the gun held at his side. *That must be the steamroller coming down the hill*, Flint mused, his pulse quickening. *Soon as these guys get outa the way and the roller comes this way, Fletcher is a dead man!*

At the top of the hill, now, the bulky metal monster came into view, its ponderous roller squashing flat the bubbling hot tar in its path. With gathering speed it moved down the hill, while the workers scrambled out of its path. Flint's gun-arm moved nervously across his face, to clear his vision, while he clung to the guard rail with his other hand . . . his eyes narrowed as he peered closely at the man perched on the seat of the steamroller. The red hair and the square-jawed face of the driver were fully in view . . . it was *Fletcher*, all right!

The huge steamroller was thirty yards

from him . . . the street workers had moved out of sight, back to the boiling tar cauldron. Flint raised his head slightly, the gun slid upward so that its sight was trained squarely on the driver of the immense juggernaut. Flint slowly counted to three, then he squeezed the trigger.

There was no sound; the silencer had done its work. Thirty yards away the body of the driver slumped forward, the man's head sagging listlessly on his shoulders. Flint started to descend back into the open manhole, his lips apart in a grimace of triumph. He heard, suddenly, the sound of sewer workers below . . . there were other men down there, coming closer! Men who might testify that he had been attempting to flee from the scene of a murder!

With a gasp of surprise, aware that his plan of escape had been thwarted, Flint leaped up the remaining steps and landed on the hot oozy street surface. Trying desperately to move his feet through the clinging tar, Flint turned and saw the enormous steamroller hurtling towards him.

He screamed just once, then the awful weight of the roller was crashing over his body . . . mashing him into a hideous blob of tortured, squirming, tar-covered flesh. His blood sprayed out like soup from a punctured can; Flint was shattered beyond recognition by the time the driverless roller had crashed into a stone wall at the bottom of the hill, and came to a stop amidst the mournful wail of steam escaping from the mangled boiler.



HERE'S A CRAZY, MIXED-UP  
FRIGHTMARE I CALL . . .

# MURDER DREAM

I WANDERED ABOUT THE LONELY  
LONDON STREETS TONIGHT, CHILLED  
TO THE MARROW OF MY BONES BY  
THE DENSE, DARK, CROAKING FOG. . .



I WAS MORE TIRED THAN I'D  
EVER BEEN IN MY LIFE, YET  
I *FEARED SLEEP*. I  
*FEARED THE DREAM!*  
SOMEWHERE IN THE VAST,  
GREY, MISTY SHROUD, HE HAD  
TOLDED MIDNIGHT. . .



AT LAST... TOO EX-  
HAUSTED TO STAND...  
MY EYES SWARTING...  
BEGGING FOR REST...  
I RETURNED TO MY  
BLEAR HOTEL ROOM.



... UNWISSESED,  
LEAVING MY CLOTHES  
WHERE THEY FELL...



... AND SPRAWLED UPON THE  
BED. . .



SLEEP CAME AT ONCE... AND THEN THE  
DREAM... THE DREAD DREAM I'VE HAD  
FOR THE PAST THREE NIGHTS COMES  
AGAIN... AND I AM POWERLESS TO STOP  
IT. . .



I AM APPROACHING OUR COTTAGE...  
BAGS IN HAND. I AM RETURNING  
FROM LONDON, MY ALSTIN PARKED OFF  
THE ROAD. IT'S ALL SO CLEAR.  
THE SOUND IS SO CLEAR. THE  
SOUND OF GATNY SCREAM-  
ING. . .





I HEAR IT SO CLEARLY... CATHY'S DESPERED HEART-RENDING SCREAM. I'M RUNNING NOW... REACHING OUT TOWARD THE DOOR. I'M CLOSER TO IT THAN I HAVE BEEN IN THE PAST TWO NIGHTS...

I'M COMING, CATHY!



**BUT I CAN'T REACH IT!** I WASH WITH HER NAME ON MY LIPS, MY BEDCLOTHES DRENCHED WITH COLD SWEAT... I BURN MY NICE IN MY HANDS, SOBBING ALONE...

CATHY! WHAT IS IT CATHY? WHY AM I DREAMING THIS? WHAT DOES IT MEAN?



I TRY TO DRIVE THE DREAM FROM MY MIND. I LIE BACK AND THINK OF THE COTTAGE AND THAT FIRST DAY CATHY LAID EYES UPON IT... STANDING SILENT AND STILL ON THAT CLEAR, WIND-SWEPT MOOR SOME EIGHTY MILES NORTH OF LONDON...

OH, HOWARD! IT'S JUST WHAT I'VE ALWAYS WANTED!

IT IS QUANT!



HOW I LOVED HER, MY CATHY! NOW I LOVE HER STILL! I REMEMBER THE SMOOKING ON THE COTTAGE DOOR... THE SQUEAK OF CHAIRSPRINGS INSIDE... THE SLOW PAD OF BOOTS ON CARPETED FLOOR... THE SHABBLY DRESSED MAN PEERING OUT... HIS STARING EYES...

WE SAW THE "FOR SALE" SIGN, MAY WE LOOK AT THE PLACE? MY NAME'S HOWARD LEIGHTON. THIS IS MY WIFE CATHY!



IT WAS A COZY HOUSE, EVIDENTLY NEGLECTED, BUT CATHY WAS ENTHRALLED WITH IT...

IT'S CHARMING, HOWARD... YOU JUST WAIT TILL I PUT MY OWN LITTLE TOUCHES ABOUT!

I DON'T SUPPOSE THERE'LL BE ANY POINT TRYING TO DISSUADE YOU, HOWARD, SO NOW THE QUESTION IS, CAN WE AFFORD IT...



I REMEMBER HIS EYES BORING INTO MINE AS WE DISCUSSED PRICE...

SEVEN HUNDRED QUID THE FURNITURE GOES WITH THE HOUSE, CLAUDE SAYES. I GO WITH THE HOUSE, TOO.

OH, THEN YOU MUST BE THE CARE-TAKER. I'M NOT AT ALL SURE I CAN AFFORD YOU, QUIDNES!



ONLY EIGHT BOB A WEEK... FOR TOBACCO, MISTER. I SLEEP OVER THE STABLE!

I DON'T KNOW.

THAT'S LITTLE ENOUGH, HOWARD, AND I WON'T HAVE TO BE HERE ALONE WHEN YOU GO TO LONDON ON BUSINESS.



EVEN AS MY THOUGHTS PAMBLE ON THROUGH THESE MEMORIES, DARKNESS SWAYS WAY TO DAWN. AND SO I RISE, TOO WORN AND HAGGARD TO TEND TO THE BUSINESS THAT BROUGHT ME TO LONDON. . .



THE DAY PASSES TOO QUICKLY AND IT IS NIGHT ONCE MORE. I AM IN BED AGAIN WAITING... WAITING FOR SLEEP TO COME AND THAT **AWFUL, AWFUL DREAM**...



**CATHY** DID SO WONDERFUL WITH THE PLACE, FIXING IT UP. HER HANDS WORKED MAGIC ON THE DECORATING... THE FLOWER GARDEN. THEN, ONE DAY, THE LETTER CAME. . .



**CATHY** LOOKED SO BEAUTIFUL, SO HAPPY, AS SHE WAVED GOODBYE FROM THE GARDEN. I FELT I LOVED HER MORE AND MORE WITH EACH PASSING DAY. . .



AWAKENESS GIVES WAY TO SLEEP. MEMORY DRIFTS INTO DREAM... THAT HORRIBLE DREAM AGAIN. I HEAR HER SCREAMING... **CATHY'S** SCREAMING FROM THE COTTAGE. I'M THERE AGAIN... RACING TOWARD THE DOOR... CLOSER NOW... CLOSER... YET NEVER SEEM TO BE ABLE TO REACH IT. . .



THE SCREAM ECHOES OVER THE GRIM GREY MOOR. AGONIZED... UNLOADING. MY POOR, TERRIFIED SCREAMING **CATHY**. LORD, HOW I LOVE HER. WITH SUPER-HUMAN EFFORT I HURL MYSELF AGAINST THE DOOR... TWIST THE KNOB... HEAVE MY WEIGHT AGAINST IT. . .



FOR AN INTERMINABLE MOMENT, I AM TORTURED... FRUSTRATED... UNABLE TO BRING MY DREAM-VISION BEYOND THAT POINT. TIME AND MOTION ARE SUSPENDED. I'M BETWEEN WAKEFULNESS AND SLEEP. I **DON'T KNOW**! I FLING WIDE THE DOOR... AND BEHOLD A SIGHT MORE HORRIBLE THAN I'VE EVER IN MY WILDEST NIGHTMARES, IMAGINED. . .



THE BOREAM PAGES. THE DREAM VANISHES. I AM AWAKE, SITTING BOLT-UPRIGHT, GLARING AT MY FACE, TRYING TO FORCE THE FINISH INTO MY MIND...



SUDDENLY I KNOW WHAT I MUST DO. THE DREAM IS AN OATH... A WARNING. I LEAP FROM BED, FUMBLE FOR THE LAMP SWITCH...



BUT MY HAND FALLS AWAY. I SLUMP BACK ONTO THE BED. I REACH FOR MY CIGARETTES IN THE DARKNESS... LIGHT ONE... DRAG DEEPLY... REFLECTING...



I LIE THERE UNTIL THE CIGARETTE BURNS DOWN AND I CRUSH IT OUT. I AM DETERMINED TO STAY AWAKE, BUT MY EYES ARE UNBEARABLY HEAVY. SLEEP REACHES OUT AND SMOTHERS ME IN ITS VELVET GRIP. THE BOREAM ERUPTS TO GREET ME...



I'M INSIDE THE COTTAGE NOW... DASHING FORWARD... CATHY ON HER KNEES... HER FACE DISTORTED WITH FRIGHT... HER EYES GLAZED IN TERROR... PLEADING WITH ME TO SAVE HER, AND BRYMES, HIS CLAWS IN HER HAIR, THAT MANIACAL LOOK IN HIS EYES, HE STANDING OVER HER, AN AX POISED...



HE SEES ME THEN, AND LETS CATHY GO. I DIVE AT HIM, GRABBING FOR THE AX...



... BUT HIS WOMAN'S STRENGTH SENDS ME SPINNING ACROSS THE ROOM...



THEN HE COMES AT ME, THE AX HOLD HIGH, HIGH...



FIVE TEETH ARE BARED, SWOOSHING WITH CAUTION. HIS WILD EYES GLEAM. HE MOUNTAINS BEING THE AC DOWN...



ASAM CATHY SREAMS... BUT THE TIME HER TERROR IS FOR ME...



THERE IS A SPLATTING EXPLOSIVE LIGHT. I AM ANKLE, A PUNCHING IN MY EARS. I SIT UP IN MY SWEAT-DROPPED BED, SHYERING...



I LIE BACK, STARING AT THE CEILING. OBLIVION CREEPS IN ONCE MORE... BLACKNESS... AND THE DREAM. I *MUST FIND OUT*... I MUST KNOW THE MEANING OF THIS AWFUL DREAM. THE WILD SALSIDOSCOPE BEGINS... THE SCREAM... RACING TO THE COTTAGE DOOR... FLINGING IT WIDE...



... CATHY ON HER KNEES... BRYMES WITH THE AR... BURNING EYES... SALTER DRIPPING FROM HIS LIFE... COMING AT ME...



...CATHY'S SCREAM... THE AR FLASHING... BRYMES... HONARD... BLINDING WHITE... RED... BLACK...



THE SCREAM FABLE. LIGHT CREEPS IN. I SEE A COFFIN... CATHY SITTING ON THE FLOOR *BENEATH* IT... SCREAMING... SCREAMING. I CAN HEAR HER SCREAMING AND I AM THERE, TRYING TO PEER INTO THE COFFIN... TRYING TO *SEE*... TRYING TO SEE WHO'S IN IT...



THEN, SUDDENLY, I AM AWAKE AGAIN. FRANTICALLY, I DRESS... PAGE... CHIEF OUT OF THE HOTEL... AND SOON THE MILES ARE FLYING BY BENEATH THE WHEELS OF MY AUTOMOBILE.

I'VE GOT TO SEE... I'VE GOT TO SEE MY CATHY... MAKE SURE SHE'S ALL RIGHT!



THE SHADOWS OF DARK DESCEND SILENTLY FROM THE GREY SKY, MEET NEAR THE DARK, BLACK BOG BY FISING WHISPS OF MIST. THE FOG FLOATS LOW AND WHIRLWIND ABOUT THE COTTAGE AS I QUIT THE CAR AND PUSH IN. CATHY IS THERE... AND JUST AS IN MY DREAM... SHE SITS BESIDE A COFFIN... SORROWING.



AND HOWARD LEIGHTON IS IN THE COFFIN.



I STAGGER TOWARD HER WITH FALTERING, JERKY STEPS. HER FACE IS PALE WITH TERROR. HER HUSBAND... CATHY'S HUSBAND LIES DEAD... AND I KNOW...



I KNOW THAT I HAVE DREAMED A MADMAN'S DREAM. I KNOW THAT I AM CLAUDE GRIMES, AND AS THE SCREAMING BEGINS AGAIN AND I HOLD CATHY'S HAIR IN MY STRONG CLAWING HAND, MY AX POISED, I KNOW... OH, LORD... THAT I CAN'T STOP MYSELF... THAT I'VE COME BACK TO THE COTTAGE TO MURDER CATHY LEIGHTON JUST AS I MURDERED HER HUSBAND.



YOU SEE, MADDIE, HOWARD LEIGHTON COULDN'T HAVE BEEN IN LONDON... BECAUSE CLAUDE GRIMES HAD ALREADY GIVEN HIM THE BURN-NESS! CLAUDE... DIDN'T THAT HE WAS... BUT THOSEBUT HE WAS HOWARD OF WISHFUL THINKING, YOU MIGHT SAY. THE MINUTE CLAUDE SAW CATHY, HE WENT OUT OF HIS MIND OVER HER. WELL, CLAUDE WANTS WITH HER FEAR-POT TO DRIVE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND WITH ANOTHER OF HER FREAKING RECIPES, SO I'LL SAY "BYE" FOR THIS ISSUE OF MY MURDERED MURDER.



THE END

# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE? NO, HORROR HOODLINGS! THIS IS YOUR SNIVEL CHEF READY WITH ANOTHER MESS OF MOLDY MORBIDITY FROM MY GRUDGY CAULDRON. IF YOU'LL JUST SLIDE IN ON THE BOOK... INTO THE HAUNT OF FEAR... THE OLD WITCH... YOUR HOSTESS IN HEAPING HELPFINES OF FOUL FARE... WILL WING UP G.K.'S BUCK MAG IN MY USUAL BORY-TELLING MANNER WITH A DELIGHTFUL DISH OF DELIRIUM DELVINGS CALLED...

## The Switch

THE COLO MORNING LIGHT PRESSED UP AGAINST THE FINE-PANELED GENT'S ARCHED WINDOWS, REFUSED ENTRANCE BY THE HEAVILY LINED EXPENSIVE DAMASK DRAPES. WITHIN, Huddled OOP IN A HEAVY LEATHER CHAIR THAT HIS Aged BODY HARDLY NARMED, WEALTHY CARLTON WEBSTER SLIGHTLY STIRRED HIMSELF. HIS WRINKLED FACE CREASED EVEN MORE WITH A PREPOSTEROUS SMILE AND HIS LYMPHATIC BLUE EYES HELD SOME COUSANT DREAM AS HE REACHED FOR THE BULLCORN BESIDE THE PRIVATE FIREPLACE...



BEFORE LONG, A SLEEPY-EYED BUTLER SHUFFLED INTO THE DEN...

"YOU NAME... WHY, MR. WEBSTER? FULTON! I'M HAVE YOU BEEN HERE ALL NIGHT? I'M IN LOVE! YOU'LL GET THE FLEA BITE!"



FULTON'S EYES OPENED WIDE AT THIS STARTLING NEWS, AND HE LIT A DESK-LAMP IN ORDER TO SEE HIS EMPLOYER'S FACE. PERHAPS IT WAS SOME KIND OF JOKE...



MAY I, NAT I BRING YOU SOME BRANDY, SIR?

OH I KNOW YOU'D THINK I'VE GONE MAD, FULTON. BUT IT'S TRUE! I AM IN LOVE! MADLY IN LOVE! SHE'S PRING... BEAUTIFUL.

FOUNO, SIR? FORGIVE ME IF I SPEAK OUT SIR, BUT ARE YOU SURE SHE'S INTERESTED IN YOU?



OH MY MONEY, YOU MEAN! LINDA HAS NO IDEA THAT I'M WEALTHY, FULTON. AND I'M NOT GOING TO TELL HER.

THE DECEITFUL MILLIONAIRE ROSE UNSTEADILY. HE PATTED HIS BUTLER'S SHOULDER...

DON'T WORRY, FULTON! I LOVE HER AND I WANT HER TO MARRY ME VERY MUCH. BUT ONLY IF SHE LOVES ME. NOT MY MONEY. I WANT GENUINE AFFECTION, NOT AN AGT.



THAT NIGHT CARLTON WEBSTER TOOK AN IMPROVING BOUQUET TO LINDA STEWART'S BEAT PLAT. HER BEAUTIFUL FACE BEAMED GRATEFULLY...



THEY'RE LOVELY, CARLTON.

NOT HALF SO LOVELY AS YOU, LINDA!

LINDA INVITED CARLTON TO SHARE THE SOFA WITH HER. HE LOOKED LOVINGLY INTO HER GREEN EYES, STUNNED HER SCARLET LIPS LONGED TO KISS THEM. HE HELD HER WARM HAND AND, WITHOUT INTENDING TO, BLURTED OUT...



MARRY ME, LINDA? I MAKE A LOT OF MONEY, BUT I COULD BE HAPPY! I'D MAKE YOU HAPPY!

CARLTON? I... I CAN'T...

THE OLD MAN'S FACE DARGED. HE PLEADED WITH LINDA...



WHY NOT, LINDA? WHY WON'T YOU MARRY ME? I LOVE YOU! COULDN'T YOU LOVE ME IN TIME?

YOU'RE... YOU'RE NOT WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR, CARLTON.

LINDA'S MIND RAGED. HOW COULD SHE HURD THIS KIND OLD MAN'S FEELINGS? HOW COULD SHE TELL HIM...



WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR, LINDA? WHY CAN'T I BE WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR?

I... I... IT'S YOUR FACE, CARLTON. SO OLD... SO WITHERED... SO WRINKLED.

FOR A WHILE, CARLTON SAT IN STONY SILENCE, BROODING...GLUMLY REFLECTING ON NATURE'S CRUELTY. AT LAST HE BROKE, PUT ON HIS COAT AND HAT, AND...



CARLTON, I DIDN'T MEAN TO HURT YOU...

EVERYTHING WILL WORK OUT IN TIME, LINDA. DEAR, YOU'LL SEE YOU'LL GET WHAT YOU WANT!

THE IMAGINATION THAT HAD EARNED CARLTON WEBSTER A MILLION DOLLARS HAD NOT DESERTED HIM AFTER ALL THOSE YEARS. AS HE RODE HIS CHAUFFEUR-DRIVEN CADILLAC BACK TO HIS PALATIAL ESTATE, HE PUFFED THOUGHTFULLY ON A DOLLAR CIGAR AND SAW VISIONS IN ITS LUXURIANT BLUE SMOKE.



SOMETHING CAN BE DONE... THEY DO WONDERS WITH PLASTIC SURGERY THESE DAYS. I'LL HAVE A TALK WITH DOCTOR HURLEY IN THE MORNING...

THE NEXT DAY, CARLTON STOPPED IN AT HIS HIGH-PRICED PHYSICIAN'S OFFICE.



THERE ARE SHOTS I COULD GIVE YOU, MR. WEBSTER... HORMONES... BUT AT FOUR ADVANCED AGE...

YOU'VE GOT IT WRONG, DOCTOR. IT'S MY FACE I WANT FIXED UP. I WANT YOUTH, DOCTOR!

THE MILLIONAIRE EXPLAINED HIS PREOCCUPATION IN DETAIL. DR. HURLEY SAT WITH HIS FINGERTIPS TOUCHING AND ASSUMED HIS GRANDEST PROFESSIONAL EXPRESSION...



THERE'S A CERTAIN DR. FAULKNER... -JOK, I'M NOT RECOMMENDING HIM, MIND YOU. IN FACT, ETHICS PREVENT ME FROM SAYING WHAT I THINK OF THE MAN'S METHODS. FANTASTIC...

BLAST IT, HURLEY, DON'T START MAKING SPEECHES. GIVE ME HIS ADDRESS...

WITH SOME DIFFICULTY, CARLTON LOCATED THE CURIOUS STONE HOUSE OF DR. HANS FAULKNER, A THICK-SET NERVOUS LITTLE MAN WITH PRISM-LINED GLASSES SPUNDED THE HEAVY DOOR AND PEERED OUT.



WEBSTER? THE NAME MEANS NOTHING. WHO SENT YOU? WHAT DO YOU WANT?

I NEED YOUR SERVICES, DOCTOR. I CAN AFFORD WHATEVER PRICE YOU ASK.

THE HINT OF WEALTH SEEMED TO SATISFY THE STRANGE PHYSICIAN. HE LED HIS VISITOR INTO AN UNLIT, NOT TO SAY UNSTEADY CELLAR LABORATORY. HE LISTENED TO CARLTON'S REQUEST...



I'VE PERFORMED THE OPERATION BEFORE, HERE WEBSTER... IN GERMANY, IN THIS COUNTRY, NOBODY WILL BELIEVE. I'M A QUACK THEY SAY. IT WOULD COST YOU TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS, AT LEAST!



THE ASTRONOMICAL FIGURE STAGGERED CARLTON. HE SAT MOPPING HIS SWEAT AS DOCTOR FAULKNER EXPLAINED.

"I TAKE ONLY FIFTY-THOUSAND FOR THE OPERATION, MR. WEBSTER. THE OTHER ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY THOUSAND IS WHAT IT WILL COST FOR THE YOUNG MAN!"

YOUNG MAN? WHAT YOUNG MAN?

IF YOU WANT A COMPLETE NEW FACE, YOU'LL HAVE TO GET IT FROM A HANDSOME YOUNG MAN, NO? NOW, DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE I'M INSANE. I HAVE DONE THIS OPERATION BEFORE! NOW, THE YOUNG MAN I HAVE IN MIND WILL DO ANYTHING FOR MONEY... A LOT OF MONEY!

THAT NIGHT, CARLTON VISITED LINDA ONCE MORE, THEN CAME AWAY REASSURED THAT SHE WAS WELL WORTH THE FABULOUS EXPENDITURE. THEN, HE VISITED THE YOUNG MAN DR. FAULKNER HAD RECOMMENDED...

DR. FAULKNER SAID YOU'D GO ANYTHING FOR MONEY, MR. BOOTH!

HE OUGHT TO KNOW! I DO PLenty FOR NOW. WHAT'S THE DEAL?

GEORGE BOOTH, THE YOUNG MAN, SAT IN SILENCE FOR A FULL MINUTE AFTER THE OLD MAN HAD GIVEN HIM THE DETAILS...

A HUNDRED AND FIFTY GRAND! AND ALL I HAVE TO DO IS GIVE UP THIS BODY OF MINE? WHAT'S IT GOT TO ME ANYWAY? I'VE ALWAYS HAD TO SCRAPE FOR A BUCK! DR. WEBSTER, IT'S A DEAL!

SPLENDID! SPLENDID!

THE NEXT DAY, THE OLD MILLIONAIRE AND THE YOUNG MAN WENT TO DOCTOR FAULKNER'S CELLAR LABORATORY. EVERYTHING WAS IN READINESS... TWO OPERATING TABLES... MUCH MEDICAL EQUIPMENT... AND THE NECESSARY CERTIFIED CHECKS...

HERE YOU ARE, GENTLEMEN! YOUR MONEY... IN ADVANCE!

WHAT ABOUT MY BLOOD, DOCTOR? I DON'T LOSE THAT, DO I?

NO! YOU KEEP YOUR BLOOD, GEORGE. I ONLY SWITCH THE SKULL BONE AND FLESH COVERING...

TWO WEEKS LATER, DR. FAULKNER UNVEILED CARLTON WEBSTER'S NEW FACE...

THE OPERATION IS A COMPLETE SUCCESS! HERE! LOCK

WONDERFUL! YOU'RE A GENIUS, DOCTOR! WAIT TILL LINDA SEES ME NOW!

DR. FAULKNER SMILED ONLY...

OH, BY THE WAY, I TOLD GEORGE BOOTH TO LET ME KNOW IF HE MOVES. WE SHOULD HAVE HIS NEW ADDRESS IN CASE WE... ER... MIGHT NEED HIM AGAIN... EN?

SOON, CARLTON RUSHED TO LINDA'S APARTMENT...

IS IT **REALLY** YOU, CARLTON? I JUST CAN'T **BELIEVE** IT. BUT **NOW** COULD YOU AFFORD SUCH AN **EXPENSIVE PLASTIC SURGERY JOB?**

THE DOCTOR IS A FRIEND, LINDA. **NOW** WILL YOU **MARRY ME?**



I... I CAN'T, CARLTON. YOU'RE STILL NOT WHAT I WANT! I... I... IT'S YOUR **BODY**, CARLTON... SO **BEST**... SO **DECEPTIVE** AND **OLD** AND **SOFT**. FORGIVE ME FOR SAYING SO, BUT... IT WOULD **DISGUST** ME!

LINDA!



CARLTON TURNED TO GO... FRUSTRATED...

I'M SORRY, CARLTON! YOU'LL GET WHAT YOU WANT, LINDA! YOU'LL **SEE!**



AND SO, AGAIN, CARLTON WEBSTER WENT TO SEE DR. FLANAGAN...

OF COURSE I CAN GIVE YOU A NEW TORSO, MR. WEBSTER. BUT IT WILL COST YOU **SIX HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS**!

WHAT? YOU'RE **MAD!** I CAN'T AFFORD THAT!



YOU CAN'T EXPECT GEORGE BOSTH TO GIVE UP HIS BODY FOR **LESS** THAN **HALF** A **MILLION**, MR. WEBSTER.

**ALL RIGHT! CALL HIM! SEE IF HE'LL DO IT!**



AND SO, AGAIN, THE CELLAR LABORATORY WAS READED. CARLTON WAS THERE WITH TWO CERTIFIED CHECKS.

THESE TWO OPERATIONS WILL HAVE **WIPED OUT MOST OF MY FORTUNE**, GENTLEMEN, BUT IT'S **WORTH IT!** HERE YOU ARE...

READY, GEORGE...

LET'S GET IT OVER WITH, DOC! I GOT **PLANS** FOR THIS **BOOTH!**



AND AGAIN, THE OPERATION WAS A SUCCESS. AFTER A MONTH OF CONVALESCENCE...

WATCH MY **STOMACH MUSCLES** RIFFLE, DOCTOR. I'M **BOLDED** AS A **ROCK** NOW. LINDA **CAN'T** REFUSE ME...

JAY, MR. WEBSTER, BUT IF YOU **NEED** ME... OR **GEORGE**... WE'LL BE **WAITING!**



THAT AFTERNOON, CARLTON TOOK LINDA TO THE BEACH TO SHOW OFF HIS STRONG MUSCULAR BODY...

LINDA LEANED TOWARDS CARLTON, HER MOST LIPS INVITING...

LINDA SHUDDERED AS CARLTON HELD HER...

I CAN'T GET OVER IT, CARLTON. HOW IS IT POSSIBLE TO GET IN SUCH WONDERFUL SHAPE IN SUCH A SHORT TIME? THAT DOCTOR FRIEND OF YOURS...

THAT'S MY SECRET, LINDA. SO YOU LIKE THE WAY I LOOK NOW.

YOU LOOK FINE TO ME, CARLTON. FINE.

OH, DARLING...

NO, CARLTON! PLEASE DON'T! YOU'RE NOT WHAT I WANT!

LINDA? MARRY ME!



NO, CARLTON! NOT! I CAN'T! I WON'T! IT'S... IT'S JUST LOOK AT THOSE BRAWNY ARMS... AN OLD MAN'S ARMS... AND YOUR LEGS... SPINDLY. KNOFF... FULL OF VARIKOSE VEINS

LINDA? FOR GOD'S SAKE!

CARLTON'S HANDSOME FACE BECAME PALE. HIS THICK BRAWNY CHEST HEAVED WITH ANGRY BREATHING...

WHAT DO YOU WANT IN A MAN, LINDA? WILL NOT FIND SATISFY YOU?

I KNOW WHAT I WANT, CARLTON. I KNOW! YOU'RE... YOU'RE JUST NOT IT!



CARLTON STOOD UP, STUFFING HIS SLENDER ARMS WITH THEIR BABY'S BRIM. HIS VIOLET OLD MAN'S LEGS...

CARLTON LOOKED AT LINDA IN ALL HER BEAUTY AND HE LONGED FOR HER, HIS YOUTHFUL BODY BURNING WITH DESIRE. AND SO, LATER...



YOU'LL GET WHAT YOU WANT, LINDA? I PROMISE.

I HOPE SO, CARLTON! I HOPE SO.



ARMS AND LEGS, OH, MR. WESTERN BEARDE WILL WANT TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND

IT'S EVERY CENT I HAVE LEFT! I'LL BE BANKRUPT! BUT FOR LINDA... IT'S WORTH IT!

RECOVERY WAS SWIFTER THIS TIME—TWO WEEKS. AS CARLTON DRESSED TO LEAVE THE SANITARIUM THAT FINAL DAY, HE SMILED EARLY.



I'M A POOR MAN NOW, DR. FALKNER?

POOR, YES... BUT PERFECT! SUCH ARMS! SUCH LEGS... SUCH A BODY, YOU ARE AN ADONIS NOW.

SMILE'S HAPPINESS SPREAD OVER CARLTON'S FACE. HE CLASPED THE DOCTOR'S HAND.



YES! THE MONEY BROUGHT ME NO HAPPINESS. NOW I'M YOUNG... STRONG... HANDSOME! I'M WHAT LINDA WANTED NOW.

GO TO YOUR LOVELY YOUNG WOMAN, HERE. WEEBIE! GOOD-BYE... AND GOOD LUCK!

CARLTON FAIRLY FLEW TO LINDA'S APARTMENT.



LINDA... I WHERE'S LINDA STEWART?

MOVED UPTOWN. HERE'S HER NEW ADDRESS!

CARLTON RUSHED UPTOWN. LINDA'S NEW APARTMENT HOUSE WAS ONE OF THOSE LUXURIOUS NEW ONES. HE HAMMERED ON HER PENTHOUSE DOOR.



CARLTON?

LOOK, LINDA! I'M A COMPLETELY NEW MAN! IN THE WAY YOU WANTED ME! YOU'VE GOT TO MARRY ME NOW!

LINDA LAUGHED...

I NEVER WANTED YOU, CARLTON... EITHER WAY. YOUNG OR OLD! BUT I COULDN'T TELL YOU THE TRUTH! AND I CAN'T MARRY YOU! I AM MARRIED.

YOU'RE... MARRIED? BUT... DR. NO?



THE OLD MAN ODDERED INTO THE SWANK LIVING ROOM... WITH CARLTON'S ARMS AND CARLTON'S LEGS AND CARLTON'S HEAD AND CARLTON'S BODY.



THAT'S WHAT I WANTED, CARLTON! A MILLIONAIRE TO MARRY! I TRIED TO DISCOURAGE YOU... BECAUSE I KNEW YOU WERE POOR! LAST WEEK I FOUND MY MILLIONAIRE! THIS IS BEOWOLF BOOTH... MY HUSBAND.

GOOD LORD!

WEEBIE! NOW THERE'S A SWITCH, EH, BIGGER! A COMPLETE SWITCH! LINDA ENDED UP MARRYING EVERYTHING CARLTON HAD IN THE VERY BEGINNING. HE COULDN'T SAVED HIMSELF THE TROUBLE, OH, WELL... THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU GO TO PIECES OVER A GAME. WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN THE VAULT OF HORROR WITH MORE BLOOD-SUCKLING FIGHTS. TILL THEN, THIS IS THE OLD WYON, REMINDING YOU TO SAVE YOUR SKIN FOR A BAIT BAIT IT'S EASIER TO DIE IN MUD! WY!



# CAR BURNING OIL?

## Engineer's Discovery Stops it Quick

### Without A Cent For Mechanical Repairs!

If your car is using too much oil—if it's sluggish, hard to start, slow on pickup, lacks pep and power—you are paying good money for oil that's burning up in your engine instead of providing lubrication. Why? Because your engine is leaking. Friction has worn a gap between pistons and cylinder wall. Oil is pumping up into the combustion chamber, fouling your spark with carbon. Gas is exploding down through this gap, going to waste.

[illegible]

Before you spend \$50.00 to \$150.00 for an engine overhaul, read how you can get that lucky engine (tested) at just a few minutes' without having a single new part, waiting! Even making your engine doing it all almost as easy as squishing toothpaste or shaving cream out of a tube, thanks to the discovery of a new synthetic substance called Power Seal. The



the brilliant quality of Moly. du pays" was also mixed with the heat-sealing properties of Vismacel, the mineral product whose particles expand under heat. (Up to 200°C. at 100 mm. pressure.)

Just insert the Power-Send out of the roller into your motor's splinder through the spark plug opening. It will expand and seal against your engine and cylinder walls at your engine's heat and will PLATINUM your surface with a smooth, strong, insulating film that won't come off. No amount of pressure can scrape it off. No amount of heat can break it down. It fills the cracks, scratches, and scuffs caused by engine wear. It changes the gap between moving plates, rings and cylinders, work an automatic self-expanding seal that stops all pumping, stops air blow-by and reduces compression. No more piston clapping, no more engine knocking. You see more power, speed, and life.

This greatest piston is self-lubricating, too. For Maly, the answer must, of course, reduce friction on working side can't. It is the only lubricant reducible enough to be used as if 8 answer energy plants and as engine. It never drains down, never leaves you register dry. Even when your car has been standing for weeks, even in coldest weather, you can start it as if it's fresh because the lubrication is in the metal itself. That's why you'll need amazingly little oil. It's not hard to see, though, that this is the way you can

You don't ride a pretty Power. Prove to yourself that PowerSteer will make your car run like new. Put in your engine oil on 30 days. Five Times. If you can't bring better performance out of your car than you thought possible—if you have not stopped oil burning and have not increased gas mileage—return the empty can and get your money back in full. PowerSteer is absolutely harmless, it cannot hurt the finest car in any way. It can only preserve and protect what's inside.



POWER RAIL ANALYSIS WORKS OUT THAT THERE ARE MORE THAN 100

Here are the **True Engineer's** modified figures showing the **second-hand** increase in consumption obtained in a 1000 lb. test run that had run for 91,000 miles. Just one **POWER SEAL** injection sustained pep and power, reduced gas consumption and oil burning, **exactly** same.

	Cell 1	Cell 2	Cell 3	Cell 4	Cell 5	Cell 6
BEFORE	100 Sec	100 Sec	100 Sec	100 Sec	100 Sec	100 Sec
AFTER	115 Sec	100 Sec	100 Sec	100 Sec	100 Sec	100 Sec

NOT RECORDED BY THE BUREAU. DATE: 11-11-1964

We simply inserted the POWER SIAL gas struts into the main or side support, as appropriate. Compression readings were taken at each spot and showed a compression of 1000 lbs. or less. As a result, the gas strut was able to support the load and power which was especially noticeable on lifts. When impacted on some of the sharp corners on all compressions, the lift cut. We've actually been saving a great deal of money. We have saved \$110.00 on one lift alone when the POWER SIAL was applied a month ago. In the other case, no compression was ever previously on the lift. We have also been getting better gas mileage. All POWER SIALs carried up to be used on the lift. From experience, we felt made. It paid for itself in a week. The POWER SIAL is a great investment. It is a great way to solve problems of compressing the lift and saving money. It would have been a great money. (The Power SIAL, Houston, TX)

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 1) Double Ball for 4-20-00, 1999 2) Double Ball for 4-20-00, 1999  
 On arrival I will pay the postage and the indicated above price postage and  
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 of my eye. Use all communication, power and influence, to get the  
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 worthless order.

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**City** \_\_\_\_\_ **State** \_\_\_\_\_  
If you would like to receive our glossy order with pictures send us your \$10.00 charge. Name change, please.

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# The Insult "CHUMP" Into a CHAMP



## I Can Make YOU a New Man, Too in Only 15 Minutes a Day!

HAVE YOU ever felt like Joe--a weakling? A lately fed up with having bigger, badder fellows "push you around"? If you have, then give me just 15 minutes a day! I'LL PROVE you can have a body you'll be proud of, packed with red-blooded vitality!

"Dynamic Tension" That's the secret! That's how I changed myself from a scrawny, 55-pound weakling to winner of the title, "The World's Most Perfectly Developed Man."

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### You Get Results FAST

Almost before you realize it, you will notice a general "looming up" of your entire system! You will have more pep,

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Send NOW for my famous book, "Exciting Health and Strength" -- 32 pages, packed with photographs, valuable advice. Shows what Dynamic Tension can do, answers vital questions. Back to a real guide for any fellow who wants a better build. Yet I'll send you a copy absolutely FREE. Just glancing through it may change your whole life. Write, please, to me personally. **CHARLES ATLAS, Dept. 104 J, 115 East 23rd St., New York 10, N. Y.**



*Charles Atlas*

—actual photo of the man who holds the title, "The World's Most Perfectly Developed Man"

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I want the proof that your system of "Dynamic Tension" will help make a New Man of me--give me a healthy, husky body and big muscular development. Send me your free book, "Exciting Health and Strength."

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# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEY, HEY! WELCOME, YOU DEAR LITTLE MONRO MONSTERS, TO MY NEW TERROR-TITLE! E.C.'S BRUESOME THREESOME IS NOW A REVOLTING FOURSOME, AS "THE CRYPT OF TERROR" JOINS WITH "THE VAULT OF HORROR," "THE HAUNT OF FEAR," AND "TALES FROM THE CRYPT" TO BRING YOU HEAPING HELPFULS OF HORROR IN THE GIFT-IMITATED E.C. TRADITION. I TRUST YOU'LL BE AMPLY SICKENED BY THIS LATEST COLLECTION OF GADDEROUS GAYOTIMOS, AS IF NOW, ALL IS AT PEACE AT THE E.C. OFFICE, BUT I EXPECT TROUBLE WITH THE VAULT-KEEPER AND THE OLD WITCH REALIZES THAT I NOW HAVE TWO MUCH-BAD TO THEIR ONE! OH, WELL, THERE'S NO USE SLAUGHTERING YOUR CHILDREN BEFORE YOU COME TO THE BURNED BRIDGES. SO, COME INTO THE CRYPT OF TERROR... AND YOUR MOST IN HORROR AND HEAVEN. YOUR CRYPT-KEEPER WILL LAUNCH MY NEW HAUSEATING NEWSPRINT-MARTOTIC WITH THE BLOOD-CORULINE SPINE-FINDLING FELD-FARN I CALL.

## UPON REFLECTION



CHESTER WAYNE TRUCKED TREMBOLUSLY ALONG THE BACKROAD ROAD LEADING FROM PLAINSVILLE. HIS HAND-POWERED RIFLE WAS READY, HIS NERVOUS FINGER ON THE TRIGGER. ABOVE, A FULL, ROUND MOON THREW A PALE LIGHT ON THE COUNTRYSIDE, SILHOUETTING EACH SHADY BUSH INTO AN OBNOXIOUS CROUCHING FORM. AROUND HIM, EACH FAINT WHISPER OF WIND BURNED, "SO BACK! SO BACK!"



I SPOKE OVER MAMIE'S BAKED BONES I'D GET THE ONE WHO DID IT TO HER. I'VE GOT TO KEEP TRYING! I'VE GOT TO!

THINKING OF MAMIE MADE CHESTER MAD AND DROVE HIM ON. HE WAS ROUNDING A TURN WHEN HE SAW IT NOT FORTY FEET AHEAD. HE STOPPED ABRUPTLY AND CALLED OUT TO THE BLACK-CLAD HILL IN THE SHALLOW ROAD-SIDE DITCH...



WHO, WHO'S THERE?

THE STARTLED CREATURE TURNED FROM ITS HUMAN PREY A CLAMMY SWEAT BROKE OUT ON CHESTER WHEN HE SAW THE HURRY FACE, THE BLOOD DRIPPING FROM ITS LIPS AND CHIN...



BAH! OH, LORD...

THE WEREWOLF BARED ITS FANGS AT THE HUNTER AND SMARLED. CHESTER DROPPED TO ONE KNEE, THREW THE RIFLE TO HIS SHOULDER AND SQUEEZED THE TRIGGER. A HOLLOW-WOODED SS SHRIEKED ACROSS THE ROAD AFTER THE NOW-FLEEING BEAST!



HIT HIM! FOR MAMIE! RIP HIM OPEN!

HE WAS MUMB WITH HORROR, HALF-BLIND WITH RAGE AS HE BLASTED AWAY AT THE DISAPPEARING MONSTER TILL THE MAGAZINE WAS EMPTY AND THE HAMMER CLICKED DEAD ON THE EMPTY RIFLE CHAMBER.



MISSED HIM! SOB... MAMIE! I SOB... MISSED...

LOATH TO LOOK UPON THE SORT REMAINS THAT LAY IN THE DITCH, CHESTER WAS NEVERTHELESS DRAWN TOWARD THEM AS THOUGH BY SOME MAGNET OF MORBIDITY. HE APPROACHED ON TREMBLING LEGS... LOOKED... THEN RECOILED IN HORROR AT THE SIGHT OF BARE BONE AND RAW, HALF-EATEN FLESH...



OH GOD!

A GREAT VIOLENT SICKNESS WRENCHED AT CHESTER'S INNARDS... AND HE TURNED, RETCHING, AND RAN THE WHOLE WAY BACK TO PLAINSVILLE...



THE MEN IN HARLEY'S TAVERN LEAPED TO THEIR FEET AS CHESTER BURST THROUGH THE DOOR, HEADED FOR THE BAR. THEY SAW THE RIFLE AND THE LOOK ON HIS FACE AND THEY DREW.

WHO... WHO WAS THAT? QUICK, FRANK! POUR ME SOMETHIN' STRAIGHT!



CHESTER TOSSED OFF A DOUBLE BOURBON... AND WHILE IT WAS STILL BURNING DOWN, HE PANTED OUT THE TERRIBLE DETAILS OF HIS HARBORING EXPERIENCE...

GOD, MAN! TELL US WHO THAT WAS! IT WAS! WE'VE ALL GOT FAMILIES!



A FARMER HAD A PLACE THREE MILES OUT... BEEN HIM IN TOWN... NICE RIFLE. GUESS HE'S GONNA BE QUITE A LONG, LONG TIME NOW... LIKE MY MAMIE!

AT FIRST THE MEN EXCHANGED GUILTY GLANCES OF RELIEF, BUT AFTER A FEW MOMENTS OF BROODING SILENCE, PAUL MYERS CLIMBED ONTO A TABLE AND SHOUTED...

THAT MAKES FIVE VICTIMS IN AS MANY MONTHS... AND WHY? AIN'T WE PAYIN' FOR PROTECTION IN THIS ROTTEN TOWN? ALL WE GET FROM MAYOR HARBON IS PROMISES! DO WE WAIT TILL THAT WEREWOLF GRABS SOMEONE CLOSE TO US BEFORE WE MAKE HARBON DO SOMETHIN'??



IT'S ALREADY TOO CLOSE TO ME, PAUL! MY WIFE MAMIE!



THAT OWES YOU MORE RIGHT TO TELL THE MAYOR OFF, CHEST. YOU'LL LEAD THE WAY AND WE'LL BACK YOU UP!

FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER, MAYOR HARBON WAS AWAKENED BY SHOUTS OF HIS NAME. HE LEANED UNHAPPILY FROM THE BEDROOM WINDOW OF HIS COLONIAL HOME AND LOOKED DOWN AT THE ANGRY CROWD BELOW.

PLEASE, GENTLEMEN! THEN COME MY WIFE IS ASLEEP! ON DOWN, MAYOR!



SOON, HIS PORTLY PANAMA-CLAD FIGURE WHIPPED IN A SLAND ROSE, THE DISMAILED MAYOR OF PLAINSVILLE STOOD BEFORE HIS TOWN-PEOPLE, LISTENING TO THE FRIGHTFUL NEWS...

TERRIBLE! TERRIBLE! I'LL SEND OFFICIAL CONDOLENCES TO HIS WIDOW IN THE MORN...



A PRT LOT OF SODD THAT'LL DO, MAYOR? WHAT ABOUT THE PROTECTION YOU PROMISED US?



WHAT CAN I DO, MR. WAYNE? FOR ONE THING, THIS FIERCE ATTACK TOOK PLACE OUTSIDE OF TOWN... BEYOND MY JURISDICTION!

MY WIFE'S BODY WAS RANDED RIGHT HERE ON THE STREETS OF PLAINSVILLE!



WE WANT MORE THAN WORDS, MAYOR!

WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO ABOUT IT, HARBON?

MAJOR HANSON TRIED TO PACIFY THE ROILING MOB...

PLEASE, GENTLE-  
MEN! NOW, MR.  
WAYNE, YOU SAY  
YOU FIRED SEVERAL  
SILVER BULLETS  
AT THE WEREWOLF.  
THEY WERE SILVER  
BULLETS, OF COURSE!

SENSE? I  
DON'T GET  
YOU, MAJOR.  
I USED NOU-  
LOW-ROUSE  
IT'S... LEAD.  
NOT SILVER.  
THEY'RE LIKE  
GUM-DUMS...

MAJOR HANSON WAS VERY ADEPT AT SHIFTING THE PRESSURE FROM HIMSELF...

WELL, I MIGHT HAVE KNOWN  
SOMEONE WOULD GO OFF HALF-  
COCKED! MY DEAR MR. WAYNE...  
IF YOU TAKEN THE TROUBLE  
TO HEAD-UP ON WEREWOLVES, AS  
I HAVE, YOU'D KNOW THAT ONLY  
A SILVER BULLET CAN KILL A  
WEREWOLF!

THE CROWD FELL SILENT WITH EMBARRASSMENT, FOR NO MAN WISHED TO ADMIT IGNORANCE TO HIS NEIGHBOR. MAJOR HANSON SMILED PATRONIZINGLY...

I'LL WELCOME ANYONE OF YOU  
TO MY LIBRARY WHO'D CARE TO  
INFORM HIMSELF ON THE HABITS  
OF THE LYCANTHROPE. MEAN-  
WHILE, MY FELLOW CITIZENS, BE  
CALM AND... GOOD-NIGHT...

THE MAJOR WENT BACK INTO HIS STately HOME, THE CROWD DISPERSED, AND CHESTER WAYNE JOINED PAUL MYERS AND CHUCK BOGGS IN A HILARIOUS SESSION AT MARLEY'S TAVERN...

THERE NEVER WAS A MAN BETTER AT  
BOURMING OUT OF A HOT SPOT THAN  
MAJOR HANSON!

WE'RE NO BETTER  
OFF THAN BEFORE  
WE CALLED ON HIM!

CHESTER WAYNE GRIMACED...

YES, WE ARE! WE HAVE TIME... A WHOLE  
MONTH BEFORE THE NEXT FULL MOON. WE  
CAN START MELTING DOWN SILVER COMBS  
FOR BULLETS! WE CAN BE READY THE  
NEXT TIME THAT WEREWOLF SHOWS HIMSELF...

SO MOST OF THE PEOPLE OF PLAINSVILLE LIVED IN DREAD OF THE COMING FULL MOON... AND THE NIGHT IT ARRIVED, EVERYONE STAYED BEHIND LOCKED DOORS AND SHUTTERED WINDOWS. ONLY CLARA HANSON, THE MAJOR'S WIFE, TEXTURED OUT TO VISIT HER AGED AND AILING MOTHER...

I'VE GOT TO BE FUNKING ALONG, MAMA  
ELWOOD WILL BE WORRYING ABOUT  
ME! PROMISE YOU'LL TAKE IT EASY...

WHAT ELSE  
COULD I DO  
IN THIS  
WHEELOCKAR,  
CLARA?

IT WAS JUST THREE SHORT BLOCKS FROM HER MOTHER'S HOME TO THE HANSON HOME. CLARA WALKED UNFRAID, UNTIL SHE SAW THE FULL YELLOW MOON HANGING HIGH ABOVE THE VILLAGE SQUARE...

SUP... THANK HEAVENS IT'S  
NOT FART!



CLARA HANSON HURRIED HER STEPS, FINDING SOME LITTLE COMFORT AS THE GRIND CLIPPING OF HER HEELS ALONG THE CEMENTED SIDEWALK KEPT TIME WITH THE RAPID BEATING OF HER RACING HEART. SHE'D REACHED THE SQUARE, ONLY ONE BLOCK FROM HOME, WHEN SHE HEARD THE TERRIFYING TRAIL. SHE SPUN AROUND, HER BLOOD TURNING TO ICE IN HER VEINS...



HER ATTEMPTED SCREAM CAME FORTH AS NO MORE THAN AN ANATHEMATIC WHEELING SCREAM, THE FLESH-STAINED BEAST SPRANG... DIPPING ITS BLEATING FANGS INTO HER THROBBING THROAT... RIPPING IT OPEN... FOUNTAINING THE BLOOD OVER ITS HAIRY FACE... INTO ITS RED BOILING EYES...



WHILE JUST ACROSS THE SQUARE, IN HARLEY'S TAVERN, CHESTER WATHE AND PAUL MYERS WERE FORTIFYING THEMSELVES AT THE BAR.



WE'RE READY FOR 'EM THIS TIME, FRANK! YEP! GOT SILVER BULLETS IN OUR RIFLES...

THAT'S RIGHT, FRANK!

HARVEY! GOT LOT OF GOOD YOU'RE DOIN' TALKIN' ABOUT IT HERE! IF YOU'RE GONNA AFTER 'EM, GOT IF YOU'RE SCARED, THEN ADMIT IT AND QUIT BULLIN'!

SHEEPISHLY, THEY KICKED UP THEIR SILVER-BULLET-LOADED CARBINES AND WALKED FROM THE TAVERN, ACROSS THE SQUARE. THEY GOT NO FURTHER THAN WHERE THE SHATTERED SKELETON OF CLARA HANSON LAY IN A POOL OF COAGULATING BLOOD, HER BLOOD SOAKED CLOTHES STREWN ABOUT...



PAUL CHOKS...

WE'RE...WE'RE TOO LATE! EMMO! LET'S GET THE MAYOR! LET'S MAKE HIM SEE FOR HIMSELF!

MAYOR HANSON WAS PLAINLY TROUBLED WHEN HE FACED THE TWO WHITE-FACED MEN ACROSS HIS THRESHOLD...



...STUCK AGAIN?? OH...

PAUL!

YEP! I'M THINKIN' THE SAME THING! YOU BETTER GET DRESSED, MAYOR!

LORD! NO! NO! I JUST KNOWED MY MOTHER-IN-LAW! CLARA HANSON! COME HOME YET! WAS IT A...A WOMAN?

THE MAYOR RECOGNIZED HIS WIFE'S CLOTHES AT ONCE. WITH MUCH LOUD BAILING AND ANGUISHED SOBBS, HE FELL ACROSS HER FLESH-STRIPPED BONES...

CLARA SOB... MY CLARA

ALL THAT CRYING WON'T HELP HER NOW...

LEAVE HIM ALONE, PAUL!



AT LAST THE MAYOR AROSE AND HIS TEAR-REDDENED EYES BLAZED

THAT FILTHY PILE THING! I'LL GET EVERY ABLE-BODIED MAN IN THIS TOWN AFTER IT!

THIS TIME IT'S YOUR WIFE, AND THE SHOE'S ON THE OTHER FOOT!

LAF OFF, WILL YOU, PAUL!



EVERY MAN WILL BE ARMED! THERE'LL BE SILVER BULLETS FOR ALL! A VIGILANTE COMMITTEE, THAT'S WHAT WE'LL HAVE! WE'LL DIVIDE INTO GROUPS... COME THE COUNTRYBOY! COME THE NEXT FULL MOON WE'LL BE WAITING!



WITHIN TWENTY-EIGHT DAYS, EVERY CAPABLE MAN IN PLAINS-VILLE HAD RECEIVED A RIFLE AND FIVE SILVER BULLETS. EVERYONE HAD PRACTICED WITH MOVING TARGETS. EVERYONE WAS READY. THE AFTERNOON BEFORE THE NIGHT OF THE FULL MOON THE MEN THROBLED BEFORE MAYOR HANSON'S MARCHION

WE'LL START NOW. IN GROUPS OF SIX... IN DAYLIGHT... SO WE CAN ADMIRAL OURSELVES WITH EACH AREA! NOW, REMEMBER



...STAY CLOSE TOGETHER AND MAKE SURE OF WHAT YOU'RE SHOOTING AT! WHEN YOU SEE SOMETHING MOVE, MAKE CERTAIN IT ISN'T ONE OF YOUR OWN PARTY. FAR OFF! ONE MAN USE A LIGHT WHILE THE OTHER MAN DOES THE SHOOTING! WE DON'T WANT ANY INNOCENT PEOPLE KILLED!



IT WAS TWILIGHT WHEN MAJOR HANSON, WEARING A RED DUDE SHOOTING JACKET AND SCARLET HUNTER'S CAP, CLIMBED FROM HIS CAR AT THE REMEDIOUS SPOT FOR HIS GROUP. CHESTER WAYNE GRINNED...

WHEE, THE FANCY GUY! ON HIS HONOR, PAUL, YOU COULD SEE IT IN A COAL MINE AT MIDNIGHT.

HUNTING IN THE DARK IS A DANGEROUS BUSINESS, MR. WAYNE, I'D RATHER BE SAFE THAN SORRY.



WHEN DARKNESS CAME, THE MEN WERE ALERT AND ALERT! MATT STEVENS, WITH HIS GROUP IN TOWN, SAW A SUSPICIOUS FIGURE, SCREAMED OUT AFTER IT, AND BEGAN SHOOTING...

CUT THAT OUT, MATT! THE MAJOR SAID TO MAKE SURE WHAT YOU'RE SHOOTING AT!



LUCKILY, MATTHEW'S SHOTS WERE WILD. THE FIGURE TURNED OUT TO BE A FAMILIAR DRUNK THEY ALL KNEW WELL...

WELL, WHAT'S YOU *RUN* FOR IF YOU AREN'T THE WEREWOLF?

I AMN'T AND SOBERED I'M GONNA BE A BITTIN' DUCK WHEN SOMEONE SPESHEN UP ON ME! MATTHEW!



MEANWHILE, MAYOR HANSON AND HIS PARTY'D SURROUNDED A STRANGE OLD WOMAN WALKING ALONG A LONELY DARK ROAD...

LADY, YOU'RE TAKING A CHANCE BEING OUT TONIGHT! BETTER LET US SEE YOU HOME!

I DON'T NEED THEEES HOME! I AMN'T SKEERED!



PAUL MYERS STUDIED THE OLD LADY.

HOLD ON, MAYOR! WHO SAYS THE WEREWOLF'S GOT TO BE A MAN? I'VE SEEN THIS GUYER CAME AROUND. I NEVER LINED HER LOOKS!

MAYBE YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING THERE, MYERS. I HADN'T THOUGHT OF A FEMALE WEREWOLF!



MAYOR HANSON AND PAUL MYERS REVEALED THEIR THEORY TO THE OTHERS OF THEIR PARTY...

WELL, NOW CAN WE TELL IF SHE IS THE WEREWOLF?

WE'LL TAKE HER BACK TO MY PLACE! I HAVE THAT BOOK! IT TELLS HOW TO RECOGNIZE A WEREWOLF... EVEN IN HUMAN FORM!



CHET WAYNE BRANCHED HIS RIFLE AND SCOOPED...

AW, BUTS TO YOUR BOOK, MAYOR. IN LESS THAN TWENTY MINUTES, THE MOON WILL BE FULL. THEN, IF THE OLD LADY TURNS OUT TO BE WHAT WE'RE AFTER, WE LET HER HAVE IT!

...AND IF SHE DOESN'T, THEN WE'VE WASTED VALUABLE TIME... PERHAPS EVEN LET THE REAL WEREWOLF ESCAPE.



THEY MADE THEIR WAY BACK TO THE MAYOR'S CAR. THE OLD LADY POUNED THEM AS THEY TRIED TO PUSH HER IN. SHE EVEN BIT PAUL'S HAND...

OWW! THE DIRTY BITCH!

I AMN'T DOWN! YOU CAN'T MAKE ME GO!



PAUL SOLVED THE PROBLEM. HE BRUNG HIS RIFLE - BUTT, CLOUTING THE OLD WOMAN ACROSS THE SIDE OF HER HEAD.

THIS... THIS IS KIDNAPPING! AFTER ALL, WE STILL HAVE NO PROOF! YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE HIT HER...

A MR, CLIMB OFF MY BACK, WATCH! AND STEP ON IT! SHE'S OUT COLD!



IT TOOK HIM OVER FIFTEEN MINUTES TO REACH THE MAYOR'S HOUSE IN TOWN. BY THAT TIME, THE OLD MAN HAD PERISHED.



I'LL GET THE BOOK AND COME RIGHT OUT! HOLD HER!

I STILL THINK YOU'RE CRAZY, HARRISON! IN LESS THAN THREE MINUTES THE MOON WILL BE FULL... AND THEN WE'LL KNOW FOR SURE!

MAYOR HARRISON HURRIED INTO THE HOUSE, STUMBLING DOWN THE ONLY LIT HALL TO THE DARK LIBRARY. HE STOPPED SUDDENLY AS HE REACHED THE DOOR... AND STARED AT THE GLEAMING EYES BURNING IN THE BLACKNESS BEYOND.



MAYOR HARRISON MOVED FORWARD SLOWLY, HIS MULE READY. THEN, ALL AT ONCE, HE SAW IT... THE BARRY FACE... THE GLEAMING FANGS FLASHING FROM BEHIND THE SHARLING CRUEL MOUTH. HE SCREAMED...



HE FIRED, POINT-BLANK, AGAIN AND AGAIN. THE VILE FEROCIOUS BEAST JUST STOOD THERE... SHARLING AT HIM.



OUTSIDE, THE MEN HEARD THE SHOTS AND TORE FOR THE HOUSE... THE MAYOR STUMBLED TO THE LIBRARY LIGHT SWITCH, FLICKING IT ON. HE SMILED AS THE BLOW FLOODED THE ROOM.



MAYOR ELWOOD HARRISON STOOD BEFORE THE FULL-LENGTH LIBRARY MIRROR, SHARLING AND SHRIeking, STARING HORRIFICALLY AT THE BULLET HOLTS HE'D MADE WHEN HE'D SHOT AT HIS OWN REFLECTION.



AND THAT'S THE FIRST SCREAM-STORY IN MY NEW PUTRID PERIODICAL, PERIOD. NATURALLY, THEY SHOT MAYOR WEREWOLF AFTER THAT. IN FACT THEY PUMPED HIM SO FULL OF SILVER BULLETS, HE HAD TO BE LOWERED INTO HIS GRAVE WITH A DERRICK! THEN A COUPLE OF GRAVE-BORERS HEARD ABOUT THE SILVER... AND BUT THAT'S





# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEH, HEH! AND NOW THAT C.R. HAS CURLED YOUR ARMED BLOOD, IT'S TIME FOR YOUR HOST IN THE VAULT OF HORROR, THE VAULT-KEEPER... NAMELY, ME, TO ENTERTAIN YOU WITH A SPINE-TINGLING, NAUSEATING NOVELETTE FROM MY CREEP COLLECTION. LET'S BEGIN! OH... LET'S NOT BEGIN YET! THIS IS A GOOD STORY ONE! IT'S CALLED...

## BLIND ALLEYS

THE "HOME" WAS OLD AND PAINT-STARVED AND DRAFTY AND BADLY IN NEED OF REPAIR... THE ROOF LEAKED AND THE WINDOWS RATTLED AND WERE COVERED WITH YEARS OF DUST AND GRIME... THE INMATES OF THE HOME WALKED GRIM-FACED AND SILENT THROUGH CRACKED PLASTER WALLS, OR SAT IN DIMMY ROOMS ON CRAWLING BEES. THEY SHIVERED IN THE COLD WHEN WINTER CAME... WHEN THERE WAS NO STEAM TO WARM THE RUSTED RADIATORS...



...AND THEY SHIVERED IN THE HEAT WHEN SUMMER BURNED... WHEN LONG-BROKEN FANS LAY TOLD AND UNREPAIRED AND INABLE TO WAFT A BREATH OF COOL... THE RELIEF...



BUT THEY COULD NOT SEE THE PAINT-PEELED WALLS...THE DIRT CLOAKED WINDOWS...THE DUSTY AND COB-WEBBED HALLS OF THIS, THEIR HOME...THESE INMATES, THEY COULD NOT SEE THE ROACHES AND THE RATS SCAMPERING ACROSS THE UNWASHED FLOORS...



...AS THIS WAS A "HOME" FOR THE BLIND...FOR WRETCHED SOULS WHO LIVED IN WORLDS OF DARKNESS...WHO STARED WITH UNSEEING EYES AT THE MISERY AROUND THEM...AND YET *KNOW* AND *HATED* ALL OF IT...



FOR THE LOSS OF ONE SENSE ONLY TEMPS TO SHARPEN THE OTHERS...TO TUNE THEM MORE FINELY...TO MAKE THEM MORE ACUTE, THE INMATES *KNOW* BECAUSE THEY COULD TASTE...AND TOUCH...AND SMELL AND HEAR, THEY COULD TASTE THE SPOILED AND ROTTED FOOD PLACED BEFORE THEM AT MEALTIMES.



THEY COULD TOUCH THE STICKY, FILMY GOBBERS...THE DUST LAYERS COVERING EVERYTHING...



THEY COULD SMELL THE POUL DROPS OF MILDEW AND FAULTY PLUMBING AND POOR SANITATION AND NEGLECT...



THEY COULD HEAR THE RATS SCAMPERING AND THE ROACHES CRAWLING AND THE TERMITES BURNING AND THE LICE AND RED-BUGS AND FLIES AND A THOUSAND OTHER CREATURES OF FILTH THAT MOVED.



AND THEY COULD HEAR OTHER CREATURES TOO...OTHER CREATURES OF FILTH THAT MOVED. THEY COULD HEAR MR. SPENCER, THE HOME'S DIRECTOR, IN HIS OFFICE-APARTMENT DOWNSTAIRS, ENTERTAINING HIS LATEST LADY-FRIEND WITH THE MONEY HE'D SAVED ON THEM...THE INMATES...



THEY COULD HEAR HIS ALMOST MIMICRAL LAUGHTER AND THE CLINKING OF CHAMPAGNE GLASSES. THEY COULD SMELL THE MOUTH-WATERING GOSSES OF THE LATELIER SUPPER HE WAS ENJOYING, AND THEY COULD SEE, IN THEIR MINDS' EYES, THE LUXURIES WITH WHICH HE'D SELFISHLY SURROUNDED HIMSELF AT THEIR EXPENSE...



YES, SUMNER BRUNWALD HAD **INDEED** SURROUNDED HIMSELF WITH LUXURIES...PAID FOR WITH THE **ALLOT-MENTS** GIVEN HIM FOR EACH BLIND INMATE. WHO **PAINTED PLASTER DREAMY HALLS** THAT THEY'D NEVER **SEE**, WHEN HE COULD HAVE AN **AIR-CON-DITIONER** FOR THOSE **BLISTERING SUMMER DAYS**...



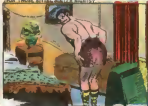
**WHY LIVE** THESE POOR MISERABLE BLIND FOOLS **BEAUTY** IF THEY COULD NOT **APPRECIATE** BEAUTY? SUMNER BRUNWALD'S **FELT** THAT **WAS** SO HE'D **SKIPPED** ON THE INMATES...**CUT CORNERS HERE... DENIED THERE...** AND WITH THE **SURPLUS**, HE'D **SUPPLIED** HIMSELF WITH **BEAUTY**...



**FINE FURNITURE...GOOD BOOKS... PLUSH RUGS...EXPENSIVE DRAPES...** AN OCCASIONAL EVENING OF **FEMALE COMPANIONSHIP**...THEY WERE **ALL** SUMNER'S TO ENJOY. HE'D EVEN **BOUGHT** A **DOG**...A **VICIOUS** **DOG**...HE'D HAD A **GOOD REASON**...



**WHY LAUNDER SHEETS AND BLANKETS** AND **CLOTHES** OF **DIRT-SMUDGES** AND **SWEAT-STAINS** THAT THEY'D NEVER **SEE** WHEN HE COULD HAVE A **HEATER** FOR THOSE **BITING WINTER NIGHTS**...



FOR SUMNER KNEW THAT **ANOTHER** **SENSE** HAD **REPLACED** THE INMATES' **SENSE** OF **SMELL**...A **DEEP-SEATED** **SENSE**...**AND** **EVERY** **DAY**, HE'D **SEEN** IT IN THEIR **HEBBERED-BLIND** **EYES**, IN THEIR **SILENT** **SMILE** **FACES**. HE'D **SEEN** THEM **SPOTTING** **HATE** SO HE'D **BOUGHT** THE **DOG** FOR **PROTECTION**...



**AND** **WITH** THE **DOG** **AT** HIS **SIDE**, SUMNER'D **TALKED-SELF-CONFIDENTLY** **BEFORE** THEM, **KNOWING** THAT HIS **SMELL** AND THE **DOG'S** **STRENGTH** WOULD **KEEP** HIM **FROM** **HARM**...



**AND** **SO**, HE'D **BEEN** **ABLE** TO **CONTINUE** TO **ENJOY** HIS **PLEASANT** **LITTLE** **AMUSEMENTS**...**LIKE** **TRIPPING** **HELP-LESS** **UNARMED** **INMATES** AS THEY'D **TOTTER** **BLINDLY** **BY** HIM. . .



...OR REMOVING SOMETHING THAT  
THEY'D COME TO KNOW WAS THERE  
AND COUNTED ON...



...OR ADDING SOMETHING NEW...



...OR BEING JUST NEAR...



YES, SUMNER'S **ABUSED** HIMSELF WITH HIS CHARGES  
INABILITY TO SEE HE'D BEEN **SARCASTIC** WITH HIS  
TORTURES. AND HE'D BROWN **FAT** ON HIS DENIALS.  
AND HIS CHARGES HAD SAT IN THEIR WORLD OF DARK-  
NESS AND **WAITED**. LISTENING.



...AND TONIGHT, THEIR OPPORTUNITY CAME...



LISTENING FOR THEIR **APPROXIMATE**  
YOU STAY OUT THERE TILL SUMNER  
IS **THROUGH**!



...SO THEY LURED THE DOG DOWN INTO THE OLD MUSTY CELLAR  
OF THE HOME WITH SOME MEAT-SCRAPE THEY'D SAVED FROM  
THEIR SCANT MEALS...



AND THEN THEY WAITED. THEY WAITED FOR SUMMER'S FRIENDS OF THE EVENING TO LEAVE. . .



THEY WAITED FOR SUMMER TO MISS HIS BOB. . .



...AND THEN THEY STRUCK? BLINDLY. UNSEEING... THEY SURROUNDED THEIR HATED ENEMY. . .



...AND DRAGGED HIM TO THE CELLAR TOO...TO ANOTHER WAITING CUBICLE. . .



BUT SUMMER'S ONLY ANSWER WAS THE SOFT WHINE OF THE BOB IN THE ADJOINING CUBICLE. . .



THEN THEY BEGAN TO WORK. THEY DRAGGED OUT OLD CHIMNEYS AND RUSTY NAILS AND LONG-LOST BARS. . .



AND THEY WENT THROUGH THE HOME AND CUT AND RIPPED AND CHOPPED THE LUMBER THEY NEEDED. . .



GUNNER LISTENED TO THE HAMMERING COMING THROUGH THE CELLAR. HE LISTENED TO THEIR SCOWLS AND CHATTER, AND HE WONDERED...



WHAT ARE THEY DOING? WHAT ARE THEY MAKING?

AND HE LISTENED AS THE NIGHT PASSED AND DAWN CAME, AND THE DOG IN THE CUBICLE NEXT DOOR GREW HUNGRY AND PACED AND GROVLED AND SCRATCHED AS ITS STOMACH GINNED...



FEED BRUTUS, YOU FOOLS! HE'LL GET WILD IF YOU DON'T! HE'LL BE DANGEROUS!

WE KNOW, MR. ORIGINAL!

THE DAY PASSED AND NIGHT CAME AGAIN. GUNNER'S OWN STOMACH ACHED WITH HUNGER, AND STILL THEY HAMMERED AND SAWED AND LAUGHED AND TALKED...



WHAT ARE YOU MAKING? WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

YOU'LL SEE, MR. ORIGINAL!

THE DOG IN THE NEXT CUBICLE HOWLED ALL THAT NIGHT, BLOSSERING AND SHARLING AND SCRATCHING. GUNNER SHUDDERED. THE DOG WAS A BEAST, NOW... A HUNGER-CRAZED BEAST, AND THE HAMMERING WENT ON...



FOOD! GIVE ME SOME FOOD! PLEASE

DO YOU CALL WHAT YOU'VE BEEN FEEDING US FOOD, MR. ORIGINAL?

DAWN CAME AGAIN AND THE SECOND DAY PASSED. NEXT DOOR, THE DOG WAS FIGHTING WITH ITSELF, THROWING ITSELF AGAINST THE CUBICLE SIDES AND HOWLING MADLY...



BRUTUS WILL KILL ANYONE THAT GETS FOOT IN THERE NOW!

GUNNER HIMSELF WAS HALF-CRAZED WITH HUNGER AS THE THIRD NIGHT CAME. AND THEN, TOWARDS MIDNIGHT, THE HAMMERING STOPPED. THE CELLAR WAS SUDDENLY FLOODED WITH LIGHT. EVEN BRUTUS STOPPED SHARLING IN ANTICIPATION.



THEY'RE... THEY'RE OPENING MY CUBICLE.

THEY STOOD BEFORE HIM... DIRTY, SWEATED, TIRED FROM LONG HOURS OF LABOR... THE INVITED... THE BLIND UNCLE TOM CARPENTERS. GUNNER BLINKED OUT AT THEM...



COME, MR. ORIGINAL! YOU ARE FREE TO GO!

FOLLOW US, MR. ORIGINAL! WE BUILT THIS JUST FOR YOU! IT LEADS TO THE CELLAR STEPS... AND FREEDOM!

GUNNER STOOD UP AS THEY DARTED OFF. HE COULD HEAR THEIR FOOTSTEPS FADE AS THEY ROUNDED CORNERS AND RAN DOWN LONG CORRIDORS THAT TURNED AND TWISTED AND DOUBLED BACK. GUNNER STARED...

THEY... THEY BUILT A MAZE?  
A PUZZLE? I HAVE TO  
FIGURE IT OUT?



AND THEN GUNNER SAW THE GLEAMING GLITTERING BLIVERS OF STEEL EMBEDDED IN THE MAZE WALLS...

RAZOR BLADES? THE WALLS ARE  
LINED WITH RAZOR BLADES?  
THEY WANT ME TO CUT MYSELF?

WHY? WH  
WHY WOULD I  
HURRY?



GUNNER LAUGHED TO HIMSELF AS HE STARTED OUT OF HIS CIRCULAR...

A SOUND BEHIND GUNNER PROVE  
HIS BLOOD? A SHRIEK AND A SCREAM  
OF A DOOR SPRING...

SAVING HUNGER-GRAZED  
BROTHER? THEY'VE FREED  
HIM TOO!

GUNNER BEGAN TO RUN. HE HAD TO  
REACH FREEDOM BEFORE THAT  
STARVED DOG COULD HIM! HE RAN  
DOWN THE TWISTING MAZE CORRI-  
DORS... THE SOUND OF THE LOVING  
SMILING DOG BEHIND HIM

THE FOGGIER I'M CAREFUL.  
IF I TAKE MY TIME... I'LL  
NEVER HAVE TO TOUCH THE  
WALLS... JUST WALK SLOWLY  
LIKE THIS CAREFUL

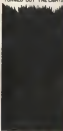


OH, LORD... LORD



HE BRUSHED AGAINST THE RAZOR BLADES, SLASHING HIS FLESH. HE STUMBLERED AND GOT UP... RAN ON... FRIGHTENED... WILD... DOWN THROUGH THE TWISTING, DOUBLING-BACK MAZE CORRIDORS WITH THE RAZOR-LINED WALLS AND THE SLITHERING HOUND CLOSE BEHIND.

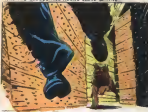
AND THEN SOME HOT  
TURNED OUT THE LIGHTS?



DOGS? WHOSE TONGUE, SUN-  
NER? NOW, NOW? DON'T GO TO  
PIECES? AFTER ALL? IT'S  
ALMOST LIKE BEING BLIND?  
WELL, KIDDIES... THAT'S MY  
SPOKEWHEEL... STORY FOR THE  
FIRST ISSUE OF G.E.'S NEW  
MAG? NOW IT'S TIME TO CLOSE

THE VAULT  
OF HORROR  
AND TURN YOU  
BACK TO HIM.

AS THE  
DISMEMBERED  
PARTS OF A  
CORPSE SAID  
WHEN THEY WERE  
SHIPPED TO THE  
UNDERTAKERS?  
"WE'LL GET  
TOGETHER  
AGAIN!" SHE?



# GONE TO SEED

It was back-breaking work, but it *had* to be done. Right away, too. He couldn't risk hiding the body of his wife in the cellar any longer . . . one of the farm hands might accidentally stumble over the corpse and start asking mighty dangerous questions. It was urgent, Dan Gret knew, to dispose of Emily right now, in this field he was plowing for spring planting. No sense in leaving a murdered wife around for the law to find!

Dan Gret heard the farm hands chattering over in the next field . . . he'd have to bawl 'em out about all this horsing around on *his* time. But at the moment he was too busy trying to gouge a hole in the ground. At first he'd been worried about the noise his shovel would make as he burrowed into the earth, but that had been taken care of without much trouble. The motor of the idling plow made so much noise that those loafers working for him wouldn't pay him any mind. And the bulk of the machine had been carefully maneuvered into place so that it acted as a shield between him and the overalled men seeding the adjoining acre. Thus, Dan Gret had resolved, was to be a *private* burial!

Dan Gret crouched low, in the shadow of the plow. By stretching out full length, he managed to tug the corpse free behind the grumbling machine and oulge it into the makeshift grave. There would be less than a foot of dirt blanketing Emily's body . . . but as soon as the hired hands got a day off he'd hurry back and dig a good deep hole to house the corpse. Within a few weeks the seeds'd be sprouting and the field would burst into furious bloom. Dan Gret grinned as he patted the last shovelful of dirt into place. Not only

was he getting rid of this devil he'd grown to hate . . . he was also helping to fertilize the coming crop!

He straightened up and surveyed his work with a critical eye. His eyes popped: one of Emily's hands was sticking up out of the soil! He lunged forward . . . and heard, with dread, the sound of voices approaching. Those bums who worked for him were coming across the field in his direction!

Dan Gret sprang toward the droning plow. If he could move the machine sideways just a few feet . . . set it directly over Emily's body . . . the danger of the moment could be averted. He turned once, to look back at the tell-tale mound . . . and his foot slid out from under him. His arms flailed the air frantically as he tried to regain his balance: his hand crashed sharply against the gear lever. The plow started immediately to swing in a rumbling circle, because of the way he had cramped the steering wheel. In motionless horror he saw the glittering blades bearing down on him!

Dan Gret screeched in alarm. Then the razor-sharp metal slashed through his flesh . . . the ponderous steel crunched over his writhing body . . . the huge wheels ground over him so that he was drenched in his own gushing blood.

By the time the farm hands reached him, Dan Gret was slashed almost beyond recognition. With gaping wonder the hired men stared down at Dan Gret's corpse . . . buried alongside that of his wife Emily, in the gory, blood-spattered grave. It was a real family plot!



SAGAS OF THE SEA, SHIPS, PLUNDER AND...



# PIRACY



BUT IF YOU *CAN'T FIND PIRACY* AT YOUR LOCAL NEWSSTAND, YOU CAN *SUBSCRIBE!* JUST FILL OUT THE COUPON AND MAIL, TOGETHER WITH *ONE HUNDRED PIECES OF GENT* (THAT'S ONE BUCK, LAND-LUBBERS!). TO:

STUDY 1

10

**A POINT OF ORDER! IF YOU'RE EXPECTING E.C.'S NEWEST HORROR MAG TO BE BETTER THAN TALES FROM THE CRYPT, THE VAULT OF HORROR, AND THE HAUNT OF FEAR, YOU'LL BE SADLY DISAPPOINTED! IT'S ONLY JUST AS GOOD!**



**INVESTIGATE** YOUR FAVORITE NEWSSTAND FOR THE FIRST "JUST-AS-GOOD" ISSUE! HOWEVER IF YOU'RE TIED UP WITH RED TAPE (ADHESIVE, THAT IS!) AND YOU'D RATHER **SUBSCRIBE**, FILL OUT THE COUPON AND SEND IN, TOGETHER WITH AN **UNDOCTORED PHOTO** OF GEORGE WASHINGTON ON A \$1.00 BILL YOU'LL RECEIVE 8 **UNCROPPED** ISSUES IN THE MAIL.

THE CRYPT-KEEPER  
ROOM 106  
225 LAFAYETTE STREET  
N.Y.C. 12, N.Y.

HERE'S MY BUCK. SEND ME THE NEXT 8 ISSUES OF YOUR NEWEST MAG, **THE CRYPT OF TERROR**.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ ZONE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_

HERE'S HOW ONE FAILURE TURNED HIS MISERABLE LIFE INTO A HORRIBLE...

# SUCCESS STORY



THE POLICE SURGEON INSERTED THE HOLLOW NEEDLE INTO ELMER'S ARM AND SECONDS LATER THE SOORUM PENTATHAL SOLUTION WAS FLOWING INTO HIS BLOODSTREAM, TAKING ITS EFFECT. ELMER'S SHRILL MANICUAL LAUGHTER FAGED INTO A WHEDDING SARR. THE PABID FURY OF HIS CONVULSIVE STRUGGLING SURSIED INTO HELPLESS EXHAUSTION. THE THREE BRANWY POLICEMEN RELEASED THEIR HOLD THEN, AND MOPPED THEIR SWEAT-BEADED BROWNS. ELMER PRESTON SLUMPED LIMPLY ON THE SHABBY SOFA, HIS FLACID FACE CHANGED TO A YELLO-BREENISH HUE. HIS USUALLY SOFT, LIQUID-BROWN EYES WERE SLAZED AND STARRING BOW. HE STARTED TO SPEAK, WITHOUT EMOTION, IN A GOWERING MONOTONE...



I'M DEAD I DID IT! IT...IT HAD TO BE THIS WAY. DON'T YOU SEE?

AND, MR. PRESTON, WE DON'T NEED YOUR BETTER TELL US ABOUT IT!

ELMER'S FACE TOOK ON A THOUGHTFUL EXPRESSION AND HIS EYES SHADED OVER WITH A DISTANT LOOK, HAUNTED WITH MEMORIES OF THE PAST. HE BOMED DEEPLY, THEN SPOKE AGAIN IN A COLORLESS DRAWLING MONOTONE...

I...I WAS ALWAYS A FURID MAN. IT'S NOT GOOD FOR A MAN TO BE THING... ESPECIALLY A MARRIED MAN. ESPECIALLY A MAN MARRIED TO A WOMAN LIKE IDA!

"MAYBE WE COULD HAVE BEEN HAPPY TOGETHER IN OUR LITTLE APARTMENT... IDA AND I. BUT ONE EVENING HER FOLKS CAME TO DINNER. HER FATHER WAS ALL TENSE, BURSTING WITH NEWS THAT HE FINALLY EXPLODED ON ME AT DINNER. . .

ELMER, YOU MUST BEEL WONDERING HOW COME MR. AND I DON'T GIVE YOU TWO A WEDDING BFT

WHY, NO, MR. WALLACE, I NEVER



CH. Chatterbox

**SURE YOU WONDERED!**  
WELL, SON... WE'VE GOT  
A **SURPRISE!** WE'RE  
GIVING YOU A **START-UP**  
A HOME OF YOUR  
OWN! **ONE THOU-**  
**SAND DOLLARS**  
FOR A **DOWN**  
**PAYMENT...**

**ONE**  
**THOUS-**  
**AND...**  
WHY, MR.  
WALLACE?  
... I **HARDLY**  
KNOW WHAT  
TO SAY!

**I SHOULD HAVE SAID, "NO THANK**  
**YOU," BUT I CAN NO HIDDEN TRAP**  
**AT THE MOMENT, AND WHEN, EXCUSE**  
**GOOD WILL, MR. WALLACE OFFERED**  
**ME HIS HAND, I GRASPED IT GRATE-**  
**FULLY...**

**JUST BE GOOD TO**  
**MY DAUGHTER,**  
**ELMER... AND BE**  
**HAPPY TOGETHER!**

**TH-THANK**  
**YOU, SIR.**

**'NOW THAT I THINK BACK, IT SEEMS**  
**THAT DA MUST HAVE KNOWN ALL**  
**THE TIME. BUT THAT NIGHT, SHE HAD**  
**TO HER FATHER, THREW HER ARMS**  
**AROUND HIS NECK, AND WEPT FOR**  
**JOY...**

**OH, DADDY DADDY!** IT'S WORTH  
**YOU'RE SO WON-** **ANY SACRI-**  
**DERFUL TO US.** **FICE TO GIVE**  
**YOU AND ELMER**  
**OUR CHILDREN**  
**A PROPER START!**

**'FOR AN ELEGANT TWO WEEKS, MA AND I HAD**  
**HUNTED. WE FOUND THIS PLACE... SMALL, COMFORTA-**  
**BLE, A DREAM COTTAGE. THE DOWN PAYMENTS FURNISH-**  
**ING THE PLACE EMPTIED MY BANK ACCOUNT, BUT I**  
**WAS DELIGHTFULLY HAPPY. THE SUNDAY AFTER WE MOVED**  
**IN, THE WALLACES CAME TO SEE OUR NEW...**

**I DON'T**  
**UNDER-**  
**STAND,**  
**MR. WAL-**  
**LACE...**

**YOU REMEMBER I SAID MA AND I**  
**I WERE MAKING A SACRIFICE**  
**TO HELP YOU GET STARTED IN**  
**YOUR OWN HOME, EL MER...**

**THE**  
**POINT,**  
**HEMBERT!**  
**GET TO**  
**THE POINT!**

**THE POINT IS, ELMER, WE HAD TO GO**  
**INTO MORTGAGE TO GET THAT THOUSAND**  
**DOLLARS FOR YOU, AND THEN MY**  
**BUSINESS SLOWED DOWN, AND...**  
**RIGHT NOW... WHAT WITH WHAT I**  
**OWE... I...**

**WELL, WE'RE**  
**HAVING**  
**TRouble**  
**MAKING**  
**ENDS MEET,**  
**ELMER!**

**'I WAS BEING TAKEN FOR A WELL-PLANNED RIDE... AND MY LOVING BRIDE HAD THE STEERING WHEEL IN HER OWN LITTLE CLUTCHING HANDS...**

**WE CAN'T LET MOTHER AND DADDY**  
**SUFFER... NOT AFTER ALL THEY'VE**  
**GONE THROUGH, CAN WE, DEAR? TELL**  
**THEM THEY'RE WELCOME TO SHARE**  
**WHAT WE HAVE UNTIL THINGS ARE**  
**BETTER. TELL THEM!**

**HUH... JIM,**  
**THAT'S...**  
**THAT'S RIGHT!**  
**OF COURSE!**

**'THAT WAS THE FIRST PAINFUL RUMBLING OF THE TEM-**  
**PEST YET TO COME. THE WALLACES SANK UP THEIR**  
**APARTMENT AND MOVED IN WITH US. MA WAS A MOST**  
**GENEROUS DAUGHTER...**

**RIGHT IN HERE, MOTHER AND DADDY! WE'LL**  
**LET THEM HAVE OUR ROOM, ELMER. IT'S**  
**CLOSER TO THE BATHROOM, AND SINCE**  
**IT'S ONLY TEMPORARY...**

"TEMPORARY, SHE SAID! BUT BEFORE I KNOW IT, THEY'D BEEN THERE FIVE WEEKS. I COULD JUST ABOUT MANAGE TO MEET MY BILLS, IF THERE WEREN'T OTHER DEMANDS ON MY SMALL INCOME.



BUT, I CAN'T AFFORD A T.V. SET, MR. WALLACE. NOT EVEN A SMALL-SCREEN SET."

THAT'S GRATITUDE! I GIVE YOU \$1000 FOR A HOME, AND YOU EXPECT ME TO FURNISH IT, TOO?"

"AFTER MR. WALLACE GOT HIS T.V. SET, MRS. WALLACE HAD A REQUEST:

"YOU'LL SEE, ELMER! WITH WHAT YOU SAVE ON LAUNDRY FOR THE FOUR OF US, THIS WASHING MACHINE WILL PAY FOR ITSELF!"



IDA SPOKE BITTERLY AND LOVELY...LOUD ENOUGH FOR HER PARENTS TO HEAR. THEY ACCEPTED IT AS AN INVITATION TO JOIN HER PIERCE MANAGLE...



SOMETIMES I WISH IDA HADN'T...WELL, I'D BETTER NOT SAY WHAT I'M THINKING."

I THOUGHT YOU HAD DATE, IDA! I THOUGHT YOU'D WANT TO GET AHEAD?"

BELIEVE ME, I'M GRATEFUL...BUT THAT MONEY WAS JUST ENOUGH TO LET ME GO INTO DEBT FOR THE NEXT TWENTY YEARS. SADDLED WITH A MORTGAGE, I'VE GOT PAYMENTS TO MEET...ON THAT...AND THE OTHER FURNITURE...AND...

THEN A FEW MORE DOLLARS A MONTH WON'T HURT! TELL YOU WHAT! I'LL PUT THE TEN BLOOD DOWN ON THE T.V. SET!"



"MONTHS WENT BY, MY BLUNDER GROWN AND WIDENED UPON ME LIKE A BILLSKOTE. ONE DAY I FOUND THE COURAGE TO TALK TO IDA...



I LIKE YOUR FOLKS, IDA, BUT I CAN'T GO ON SUPPORTING THEM FOR...

SUPPORTING? AFTER WHAT THEY'VE DONE! WHAT A LOATHSOME WAY TO REPAY THEM FOR THEIR GENEROSITY!"

"THE CORNERS OF IDA'S MOUTH DROPPED, AND HER EYES WERE COLE AND HARD...PIERCING ME THROUGH AS SHE SPOKE...



YOU'RE BLAMING MOTHER AND DADDY BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT A GOOD PROVIDER. YOU MIGHT AS WELL KNOW IT, ELMER! I'M NOT SATISFIED...NOT AT ALL SATISFIED. I THOUGHT YOU HAD AMBITION! I THOUGHT YOU'D GO PLACES...SET AHEAD IN THE WORLD. INSTEAD, YOU'RE STUCK IN A POOR PAYING JOB.

"DRIVEN MORE BY DESPERATION AND DEBT THAN BY THEIR BODOR, I FINALLY GATHERED THE COURAGE TO ASK MY BOSS, MR. BENTLEY, FOR A RAISE. BUT THE MINUTE I ENTERED HIS PLUSH OFFICE...



I'VE BEEN MEANING TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT YOUR WORK, PRESTON. YOU'VE BEEN SETTING CARELESS LATELY...SLOPPY...VERY SLOPPY!"

I...I DON'T REALIZE, MR. BENTLEY! I'M SORRY, BUT I'LL DO BETTER IN THE FUTURE! I PROMISE!"

"I HAD UNCOVERED A GEM BY COMPLAINING AGAINST IDA'S POLICE, AND FROM THAT DAY ON, A SPIRITFUL TORRENT OF CRITICISM FLOODED THROUGH THE FLOODGATES AT ME..."

"HOW COULD I TELL THEM MR BENTLY HAD MORE THAN REFUSED ME A RAISE? THEY SAID HE NO PEACE, FROM THE MOMENT I CAME HOME FROM WORK..."



WHAT ABOUT THAT RAISE I TOLD YOU TO ASK FOR, ELMER? WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO GET ENOUGH NERVE?

ASK FOR? YOU DON'T ASK FOR A RAISE? YOU DEMAND IT? THAT'S THE ONLY WAY TO GET AHEAD... BY DEMANDING...



WELL, ELMER, HOW'D YOU MAKE OUT? DID YOU TELL THEM MORE OF YOURS TO COME AHEAD OR GET A NEW BOY?

I TOLD HIM NOTHIN' MR WALLACE. NOBODY TALKS THAT WAY TO MR. BENTLY!

"...AND I'D ALWAYS GET THE SAME RESPONSE..."

"EVERY MEAL BECAME A NIGHT-MARE, FROM THE TIME I'D SIT DOWN..."

"I'D FORCE MYSELF TO EAT, AND THE PASTELOR FOOD WOULD SOAR ON THE WAY DOWN..."



WELL, DON'T... GOOD LORD, MAN! DON'T YOU WANT TO GET AHEAD IN THIS WORLD?!



YOU'RE A FAILURE, ELMER! I CAN'T STAND A FAILURE!

ALL MY LIFE I FIGHT TO GET AHEAD...



DON'T WASTE YOUR BREATH, HERBERT! YOU CAN'T TURN A JELLY-FISH INTO A TIGER SHARK, I ALWAYS SAY!

"SUDDENLY THERE'D BE A VIOLENT CHURNING IN THE PIT OF MY STOMACH AND I'D HAVE TO RUN FROM THE ROOM..."

"I'D WALK IT TO THE BATHROOM, MOST OF THE TIME... AND ALL BUT HEAVE UP MY INSIDES..."



SO DON'T RUN! IF I WERE IN YOUR SHOES, I WOULDN'T WANT TO HEAR THE TRUTH ABOUT MYSELF... EITHER!

BEE? YOU TRY TO TELL HIM SOMETHING FOR HIS OWN GOOD AND HE RUNS OFF IN A HUFF! HE'S INSULTED!

WELL, DON'T... GOOD LORD, MAN! DON'T YOU WANT TO GET AHEAD IN THIS WORLD?!



YOU MARRIED A REAL LEMON, IDA!

HE'LL NEVER AMOUNT TO ANYTHIN'!

OH, DON'T...

"NOW DID THE THUNDER STOP WHEN WE WENT TO BED. IDA WOULD HAD ME TELL SHE WAS HOARSE, AND I'D COVER MY HEAD WITH MY PILLOW, BUT I'D STILL HEAR."

ONLY SIXTY-SEVEN MISERABLE DOLLARS A WEEK... IN THESE DAYS. I'M ASHAMED FOR MOTHER AND DADDY TO KNOW... BUT OF COURSE THEY DO KNOW. THEY KNOW THE KIND OF CLOTHES I WEAR... THEY SEE THE FURNITURE... THREADBARE... JUNK!

PLEASE... IDA! IT'S LATE.



"WHEN I'D HEARD ALL I COULD STAND, I'D HURRY FROM THE LIVING ROOM."

NEVER MIND, MOTHER! FROM NOW ON, I'LL DO THE BUYING! WE CAN'T AFFORD MUCH, MAYBE, BUT WHAT WE DO GET WILL BE THE BEST!



'EVER A LOOKED DOOR WAS NO GUARANTEE OF PRIVACY.

ARE YOU GOING TO STAY IN THERE ALL NIGHT, ELMER? LISTEN—ABOUT THE TV SET! I WAS DOWNTOWN TODAY, TALKING TO A DEALER ABOUT A TRADE-IN ON A LARGER SCREEN, AND...



"SO THE MONTHS DROGGED INTO YEARS AND THE WALLACE STAYED ON WITH US... BASSING ME, HOUSING... COMPLAINING... ALWAYS COMPLAINING..."

YOU REMEMBER WHEN YOU BOUGHT THAT WASHING MACHINER? I TOLD YOU IT DIDN'T PAY TO BUY CHEAP! WELL, IT'S READY FOR THE JUNKHEAP!

IT WON'T GET LONELY THERE, BELIEVE ME. IT'LL HAVE THAT STINKING TWELVE-INCH-SCREEN T.V. SET FOR COMPANY.



'I WAS TOO TIMID TO ADMIT IT TO MYSELF THEN, BUT I'D COME TO HATE IDA AND HER MOTHER AND FATHER. I'D BE SHAVING IN THE MORNING AND MY WIFE WOULD COME IN AND THE DAY'S WASHING WOULD BEGIN."

I DON'T SEE WHY DADDY SHOULD HAVE TO KEEP POUNDING IT INTO YOU! YOU SHOULD WANT TO GET AHEAD YOURSELF, ELMER.

I KNOW, DEAR.



"THIS MORNING, AS ALWAYS, WE SAT AT THE BREAKFAST TABLE AND I LISTENED TO THEM TALKING, TALKING... AND HEARD, THE STORM GATHERED. I COULD HEAR IT RUMBLING."

A MAN WITHOUT AMBITION IS A WALKING CORPSE, ELMER! I KNOW I'M REPEATING MYSELF, BUT TRY TO BE A SUCCESS. TRY, ELMER. ELMER? YOU LISTENING?

MOM! ONLY YES, YES, I'LL TRY!



"AND TODAY, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN YEARS, I DIDN'T GO TO WORK. I WANDERED AROUND THE STREETS, WONDERING WHAT WAS WRONG WITH ME... LISTENING TO THE STORM THUNDERING IN THE DISTANCE, COMING CLOSER... CLOSER... READY TO BREAK AT ANY MOMENT..."

WHY DON'T I GET AHEAD? EVERYBODY ELSE DOES! I'VE GOT TO! I'VE... HEH HEH... I'VE... EN-JEE...



"WHEN I GOT HOME THAT NIGHT, LATE FOR DINNER, THEY JUST STARED AT ME...IDA AND MR. WALLACE AND MRS. WALLACE. THE STORM RUMBLED AROUND...THREATENING...THREATENING TO BREAK...THENE...IN MY THROBBING HEAD...AND I JUST STARED BACK AT THEM..."



WELL?

IT'S ABOUT FINE!

WHERE WERE YOU TODAY? MR. BENTLEY CALLED!

"THEN, SUDDENLY, THE STORM TORE LOOSE...HOWLING, SCREAMING-BLACK AROUND ME...THUNDERING...WILD TEMPEST-FURY AND ABOVE THE STORM, THEIR VOICES...THEIR RASTY VOICES..."



IS THAT THE WAY TO TRY TO GET AHEAD...STAY HOME FROM WORK?

YOU SAID YOU'D TRY TO GET AHEAD, ELMER!

WHY CAN'T YOU GET AHEAD, ELMER?

"I RAN OUT...BUT NOT TO THE BATH-ROOM THIS TIME. I RAN TO THE KITCHEN...THROUGH THE RAGING STORM, I CAME BACK WITH THE MEAT CLEAVER..."



ELMER!

"THE STORM SHRINKED IN MY BRAIN. WHITE BLINDING LIGHTNING FLASHES EXPLODED. THE BLACK FURY TURNED RED, RED, SPURTING RED AS I RAISED THE CLEAVER..."



ELMER!

YAAA...AAH...

ELMER PRESTON STARED STRAIGHT AHEAD, SMILING. THE WILD GLEAM RETURNED TO HIS EYES, AND HE CHOKED OUT MORE WORDS BETWEEN SHORT, HIGH-PITCHED BURSTS OF LAUGHTER...



SO YOU SEE, I...EH, EH...DID GET AHEAD, EH, EH...AFTER ALL!

AND SLOWLY, THE POLICEMEN FOLLOWED ELMER'S WILD GAZE TO THE DINNER TABLE...TO THE MEAT PLACE SETTINGS...AND THE PLATES WITH THEIR MARCHING PARS STANDING BACK AT THEM...



I...EH, EH...I NOT ONLY GOT A HEAD...I...EH, EH...I GOT THREE HEADS!

YEAH, PRESTON! OH, WE SEE

YOU WERE A REAL SUGGER, PRESTON!

HEH, HEH. A TRIPLE HEADER, EH, HIGHEST SO, IDA AND HER FOLKS DROVE ELMER BATS, BUT THEY WENT OUT ON STRINGS...IN ONE, TWO, THREE GREEN...ALL RIGHT OVER THE PLATE. WELL, THE GAME'S OVER NOW, CALLED ON ACCOUNT OF MENTAL STORM! AND YOU AND I WILL TAKE A BASH-ONCE TILL NEXT WE MEET. HOPE YOU LIKED MY NEW MAN, NOW THE OLD WITCH AWAITS TO WIND UP THE PRESIDENTIALTIES. THIS IS YOUR DRAFT-KEEPER, SIDDING YOU GOOD-BYE AND WISHING YOU NOTHING BUT THE BEST...RIGHTBARES!





# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE-HEE! AND NOW IT'S WIND-UP SPOT IN C.K.'S NEW CREEPS COMIC, AND YOUR DRIVER-CHEF, THE OLD WITCH, IS READY TO STIR UP HER GROSSY CAULDRON AND LAKE OUT A LURID LITERARY LUNCHEON. THIS TASTY TALE OF TERROR-FREMORE IS TOLD BY ONE TONY BARRETT. LISTEN, NOW, AS HE SARFS OUT THE DELIRIUM DISH HE CALLS...

## TATTER UP!



DELIRIUM

**MET** I'M TONY BARRETT. I'M NOT A BAD-LOOKIN' BUT I'M FOUNG, FOD THIRTY-FOUR. OHAY, SO NOW **COME** I COULD SIT AROUND ON A HOT-REDDIN' COUCH, **HOLDIN' HANDS** WITH A SHAGGLE-TOOTHED HAG NAMED FANNY OGDEN. **NOW COME** I COULD STAND THE MILDLY-YELLOWED WALL PAPERS... THE CRACKED CEILING... THE WHOLE HOUSE STINKIN' LIKE THE MOUTH OF A DUG-UP COFFIN... AND THE STINK OF FANNY HERSELF! **YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT! YOU GOT THE PICTURE?** FANNY OGDEN WAS SUPPOSED TO BE LEADED!

I... I BEEN HEARNIN' T' ASK YOU, FANNY. I JUST DON'T KNOW **NOW!** I... I BEEN HEARNIN' T' ASK YOU IF YOU'LL **MARRY ME!**

OH, TONY! I'VE BEEN **PRAYIN'** YOU'D ASK ME... **DREAMIN'** OF IT... BUT NEVER REALLY **BELIEVIN'** YOU WOULD! OH, YES, TONY! **YES! I WILL MARRY YOU!**



**SURE I WANTED** THAT WOOLGONE WITCH FOR A WIFE. I WANTED TO MARRY THE **HUNDRED GRAND FORTUNE** TO HEARD ABOUT. THE **DOOM** HER **FIRST HUSBAND** HAD LEFT HER, THE MISERABLE WIDOW WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE **EVERY LAST CENT** OF IT. **NOL THERE**, IN THAT FOUL-SMELLIN' FILTHY HOUSE...

THEN I **GUSS**... **CHORE** THIS CALLS FOR A **KISS!**

IT'S BEEN SO **LONG** SINCE I'VE BEEN **KISSED, TONY!**



WELL, I'LL STOP THE OBSCUREST DETAILS EXCEPT TO SAY THAT FANNY BECAME MRS. TOMMY BARRETT, AND I STARTED HITTING THE BOTTLE TO BRACE MYSELF AGAINST LIVING WITH HER...



AREN'T YOU COMING UP, MONEY-BURN? IT'S LATE...

YOU GO AHEAD, FANNY! I'LL BE UP IN AN HOUR OR SO. DON'T WAIT UP.

TROUBLE WITH DINNER? WAS IT USED TO SET ME DOWN, IT'D WORRIE. I'D WORRY REAL BAD...



MAYBE THERE **AIN'T** NO COOKIN, MAYBE I GOT A **BUR STEER** FROM THE **BUT** THAT **FOLD ME**

AFTER THE FIRST TWO WEEKS, I GOT REAL DISGUSTED. THERE WAS NO HINT OF THE BOON.



I'M BEGINNIN' T' THINK I'VE BEEN A **DOCKER**, SADDLEIN' MYSELF WITH A **DRICK-UP** WITHERED **EXCUSE** FOR A **FEMALE**. I'LL **WAKE UP** ONE DAY AND FIND OUT THERE **AIN'T** NO HUNDRED S'-'S WELL, IN A **PIR'S** STE I WILL!

SO I WENT UP INTO THE BEDROOM WHERE FANNY SAT WITH THAT STRABBLED WOP OF HERB UP IN CURLERS. BUT I DON'T LOOK AT FANNY THERE. I HEADED FOR THE CLOSET...FOR MY SUITCASE.



FANNY IS THERE SOMETHING **WROTH**?

FEAR, BABY! YOU AND ME! I'M **CLEARIN'** OUT.

I BOUNCED MY SUITCASE ONTO THE BED AND TOSSED MY CLOTHES INTO IT. MY BRIDE JUMPED UP LIKE A BEE'D STUNG HER, AND SHE THREW HER SNEY ARM AROUND ME.



FANNY! PLEASE! DON'T LEAVE ME! PLEASE DON'T!

WE MADE A MISTAKE! FORGET IT! FORGET ME, FANNY!

TOMMY I **KNOW** I'M **UGLY**. UGLY AND OLD. BUT I'M **WICK**. I NEVER TOLD YOU, DID I? I'VE GOT A LOT OF **MONEY**. AND I **LOVE** YOU, TOMMY... AS MUCH AS I CAN. YOU'RE **HANDSOME**. FANNY, I HAVE JUST A **FEW** YEARS LEFT. STAY WITH ME AND MAKE THEM **HAPPY** YEARS, FANNY, AND WHEN I'M **GONE**, ALL THAT **MONEY** WILL BE **YOURS**!

OHAY, BABY! DRAFT YOU TALKED ME INTO IT!



WELL, IT TURNED OUT THERE **WAS** MONEY AFTER ALL. THE **BUY'S** BEEN **RIGHT**. SO I DID MY **BEST** TO MAKE FANNY **HAPPY**. I **STAYED**. BUT I WONDERED WHAT SHE **LIVED ON**, IF SHE NEVER **SPENT** ANY OF HER **DOWRY**, AND ONE DAY, I FOUND OUT...



IS MRS. **BARRETT** AT HO--

YOU! THE **BUY** I **MET**! THE **BUY** THAT **TOLD** ME ABOUT HER...

I'M A **RABBIT**!  
MRS. OGDEN IS  
ALWAYS SELLING  
ME HER OLD  
RAGS...



MRS. OGDEN IS  
MRS. BARRETT  
NOW, MOTHER.  
MY WIFE! DON'T  
YOU REMEMBER  
WHY YOU TOLD  
ME ABOUT HER...

YOU HAVE A **NICE**  
WIFE, SIR. SHE'S  
VERY GOOD TO ME.  
SHE ALWAYS HAS  
RAGS TO SELL  
ME. I'M A  
**RABBIT**...



MAYBE I'M  
WRONG BUT  
I COULD  
**BREAK** IT  
WAS FOR  
I MET THAT  
NIGHT...

BUT AT THAT MOMENT, FANNY TRUM-  
BLED DOWN THE STAIRS WITH A LOAD  
OF OLD RAGS... MEN'S SUITS...  
WOMEN'S DRESSES, KID'S CLOTHING.  
THE RABBIT GRINNED LIKE AN  
IDOT WHEN HE SAW THEM...



FINE, MRS. BARRETT! **SEVEN**  
PENT FINE! YOU  
GET **SEVEN** DO-  
LLARS FOR THESE!  
FOR THAT OLD  
LARDERET  
WOM!

THE OLD CREEP STOPPED COLD AND GAVE ME A  
FIGHT STARE, LIKE I'D INSULTED HIM. FANNY  
TRIED TO COVER UP...



TONY DON'T  
MEAN ANY-  
THING. HE  
JUST DOESN'T  
UNDERSTAND

FEAR, MA.  
NO HARD  
FEELINGS!  
IF YOU WANT  
TO OVERPAKE  
IT'S YOUR  
BUSINESS...

YOUR WIFE HAS  
BEEN GOOD TO  
ME... AND I TRY  
TO BE GOOD TO  
HER. HERE YOU  
ARE, MRS. OGDEN...  
MRS. BARRETT!

NICE, RIGHT? BEIN' MARRIED TO AN OLD HAG-WAGT  
ENOUGH! NOW I HAD TO FIND OUT SHE WAS A  
**RAG-PICKER** BESIDES. THAT WAS THE LAST  
STRAW. I'D MADE UP MY MIND WHEN FANNY  
ANNOUNCED AFTER LUNCH...



I'M GOING **OUT** BEIN'  
GONE IN TOO LONGER  
WHILE I'M GONE!

FEAR FANNY!  
BUNE!

AFTER THE RABBIT PAID FANNY, HE LEFT. I FELT PRETTY  
SHOR INSIDE... YOU CAN IMAGINE...



WHAT'S WITH THIS **RAG**  
BUSINESS, BAST? WHERE  
DO YOU GET THEM?

WHY I PICK THEM UP,  
TONY... HERE AND  
THERE...

FANNY DIDN'T SAY WHAT SHE WAS GOIN' OUT FOR, BUT I KNEW  
IT WAS TO DO SOME **RAG-PICKIN'**. WELL, THAT WAS OKAY WITH  
ME. THAT GAVE ME TIME TO RUMMAGE THROUGH THE RUBBLE  
CRUMMED UP IN AFTER SOME POOR'S OF MY OWN...



I GOT TO FIND THAT **DOUGH**! I GOT TO FIND THAT  
DOUGH AND GET AWAY! ME, MARRIED TO A TOAD-FACED  
**RAG-PICKER**! I'LL GO HUNTS IF I HAVE T'KEEP ON  
LIVIN' WITH HER!

I TURNED THAT OTTIC UPSIDE DOWN BUT IT WAS NO SOAP. I DIDN'T FIND A THING.



IT'S GOT TO BE IN THE HOUSE SOMEWHERE! YOU JUST DON'T **HIDE** A HUNDRED GRAND IN A HOUSEHOLE! I'LL FIND IT IF...

TONY! WHERE ARE YOU TONY?

IT WAS FANNIE SCALLIN' ME. I WENT DOWN AND GOT NAUSEOUS LOOKIN' AT HER...THAT PATCHED AND FADED DRESS...THE TWO DIFFERENT COLORED COTTON STOCKING'S...AND ON HER FEET...NO KIDDIN'!...SHE HAD A BIRTY SACK STUFFED FULL OVER HER SHOULDER...



LOOKS LIKE HUNTY WAS PRETTY GOOD TODAY, FANNY. HOW MUCH YOU GOT **EIGHT** DUCKS WORTH. **MARIE** TEN?

WHERE WERE YOU TONY?

I COULDN'T STAND THE MESS AROUND THIS HOUSE ANY MORE, SO I STARTED **CLEANIN'** UP IN THE ATTIC.

IN THE ATTIC? OH, WELL. THAT'S NICE.



FANNY DIDN'T SEEM DISTURBED ABOUT ME WORKIN' AROUND UP IN THE ATTIC, SO I FIGURED THAT'S NOT WHERE THE HUNDRED B'S WAS STASHED AWAY. I WAS ALL ON EDGE WAITIN' FOR HER TO GO OUT AGAIN BE' I COULD START LOOKIN' SOMEWHERE ELSE. BUT FIRST THE BABMAN TURNED UP.



I COULD SWEAR HE'S THE SAME GUY THAT TOLD ME ABOUT **FANNY**.

SUCH NICE RASS, MRS. BARNETT. SUCH **BEAU-TIFUL** RASS.

AFTER A WHILE I GOT MAD AND RIPPED OPEN THE MATTRESS ON THE OLD MARRIED BED. I WAS SO BUSY, I DIDN'T HEAR FANNY SNEAK UPSTAIRS AND CREEP INTO THE ROOM LIKE A SCRAWNY OLD CAT. BUT SINCE ONLY I FELT HER THERE...



FANNY... I...

I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU'RE **STILL** **CLEANIN'** UP, TONY.

FINALLY FANNY LEFT WITH HER RABBACK, AND I WENT TO WORK ON ONE OF THE UPSTAIRS ROOMS, PERLIN' THROUGH BATTERED MOTH-EATEN FURNITURE, FLOWIN' THROUGH THE TRASH-STUFFED CLOSET...



IT'LL TAKE ME MONTHS TO FIND THAT COUN- A FEAR, MAYBE... UNLESS I'M **LUCKY**.

I COULD TELL SHE KNEW WHAT I WAS UP TO, 'CAUSE SHE HAD A SMILE INSIDE THAT BLINDED THROUGH HER EYES. SHE WAS LAUGHIN' IN HER BUTS 'CAUSE I COULDN'T FIND HER HOUND, AND IT MADE ME MAD...



FEAR, THAT'S WHAT I'M **DOIN'**... **CLEANIN'** UP THIS FILTHY PESTER! MAYBE YOU DON'T LIKE THAT.

I SAID I'M GLAD, HONEY...

THAT'S HOW IT WENT FOR WEEKS. EVERY DAY THAT BARMAN CAME AND GOT PRACTICALLY DELIRIOUS OVER SOME POOL, BACK MY WIFE SOLD



AND EVERY DAY, AFTER SHE WENT OUT BORDOWEN THROUGH LONG-KNOWN WHAT TRASH FOR RAGS, I PLUNGED INTO MY TREASURE HUNT...



AND SEE'D COME BACK...KNOWIN' WHAT I WAS UP TO, BUT I DIDN'T GIVE A HANG EXCEPT THAT SHE WAS ALL THE TIME LAUGHIN' AT ME AND IT'D GET ALL CHOSED UP WITH HATE FOR HER...



FINALLY I COULDN'T TAKE IT NO MORE. I COULDN'T STAND FANNIE GIVIN ME THE HORSE-LAUGH. I COULDN'T STAND LOOKIN' AT HER. SO ONE DAY, I WENT DOWN THE CELLAR AND STARTED DIGGIN'... BUT NOT FOR HER MONEY.



AND WHEN SHE GOT HOME THAT DAY, I LISTENED TO HER CALL ME, BUT I DIDN'T ANSWER. I MADE SOME NOISE AND WAITED...



FANNIE LOOKED AT ME REAL COLD LIKE AND WHISPERED SACRILEGIOUSLY...



FANNY COULD SEE BY MY FACE I WAS LEVELIN'. IT WAS LIKE SHE'D NEVER EXPECTED THIS TURN OF EVENTS, SHE LET OUT A LITTLE GIGGLE AND STARTED TO RUN. I WOUND THE RICH HARD.



THE PICK HOOKED HER DEEP IN HER BACK AND SHE HIT THE CELLAR FLOOR LIKE AN OULD LOG THEN I WENT TO WORK ON THAT FACE ... THAT ANWLL MELT FACE. IT WAS JUST SOMETHIN' I HAD TO DO JUNE I WAS GETTIN' EVEN FOR HAVIN' DEGRADED MYSELF BY MAKIN' LOVE TO IT ALL THOSE MONTHS...

HH-HH, HH-HH, HH-HH



I WAS OBTAINED FROM WHAT I'D DONE SO I GOT THE PAY EARLY THAT NIGHT AND SLEPT UNTIL I HEARD A

## THE PLAYERS

LOOK, PAL. MY WIFE  
TOOK OFF ON A LONG  
TRIP SHE WON'T BE  
BACK FOR A COUPLE  
OF WEEKS COME BACK  
FOR ME!

**WANT  
YOUR  
BUSINESS  
GROWING?**



I WAS READY TO BLAST THE DOOR IN HIS FACE BUT, JUST TO GET RID OF THE PEST, I CRASHED DOWN SOME

THESE AREN'T  
VERY GOOD  
MR. GARNETT,  
CAN'T PUT TO  
ANY USE.

FORGET IT  
BUT TAKE  
THE... AS A  
GIFT NOW,  
GO AWAY  
AND DON'T  
BOther  
me?



**I SPENT DAYS COMBIN' THROUGH THE REST OF THE HOUSE. I EVEN TOOK UP THE KITCHEN, SMASHED ABOUT FOUR-FOUR-FOUR. NO-CHANCE! IT WAS NOTHING BUT DIRT. NOTHING.**

IT'S JOY TO BE HERE...  
SOMEWHERE? IT'S JOY  
TO? I CAN'T WAIT? I  
CAN'T



AND TO TOP IT ALL OFF, THAT CRUMMY CREW KEPT COMING BACK, ALL THIS MORNING. I FLIPPED MY LID.

I'VE BEEN OVER THIS GUMP FROM  
ATTIC TO CELLAR! I GAVE YOU  
EVERY RAG I COULD FIND! I  
GOT NO MORE RAGS! NOW,  
FOR GOD'S SAKE, LEAVE ME  
ALONE!

WOULD  
HAVE BEEN  
THEY WERE



NOW I'M A BOY WITH A STRONG CONSCIENCE, SO WHAT WITH THE RUSSIAN PESTERING ME AND PANNY LATIN DEAD IN THE CELLAR, I COULDN'T SLEEP TONIGHT, AROUND MIDNIGHT OR SO, I HEARD A NOISE IN THE HOUSE. I GOT A RUN OUT OF MY SUITCASE AND WENT DOWNSTAIRS FOR A



The... I WAS COMIN' FROM THE CELLAR. I WENT DOWN, IT WAS HIM ALONE... IN MY HOUSE... NOBIN' APPEARS.



I TOLD YOU I GOT NO MORE RAGS! NOW...

BUT YOU DO! HUGE RAGS! THE CLOTHES ON HER!

HE WAS POINTIN' TO FANNY'S BRAVE. HE KNEW I'D KILLED HER, AND I KNEW THEN I'D HAVE TO KILL HIM. I PULLED THE TRIGGER... ONCE... TWICE... HE DIDN'T EVEN WINCE...

I COULDN'T MISS AT SUCH CLOSE RANGE! I HIT YOU TWICE... I CAN SEE THE HOLES...

I LOVED HER, MR. BARNETT! I WANTED HER TO BE HAPPY! I DIDN'T EXPECT THIS!



I EMPTIED THE GUN AT HIM FOUR MORE SHOTS. BUT HE JUST STOOD THERE...



SHE NEEDED MORE THAN I COULD GIVE HER... SOMEONE YOUNG... SOMEONE LIKE YOU! THAT'S WHY I TOLD YOU ABOUT HER MONEY! SHE WANTED HER TO BE HAPPY!

DIE! I SHOT YOU SIX TIMES! DIE ALREADY!

I KEPT STABIN' STUPIDLY AT THE SIX HOLES BURNED INTO HIS CHEST. THEN I SMASHED UP THE PICK. I SWUNG IT, CATCHIN' HIM BELOW THE SHOULDER, SHOVIN' IT INTO HIS BACK...



YOU'RE NOT HUMAN! YOU'RE NOT! THERE'S NO BLOOD! YOU'RE NOT EVEN FLESH AND BONE!

OF COURSE NOT, MR. BARNETT

HE LEAPED AT ME, WRAPPING HIS HANDS AROUND MY THROAT. FUNNY KIND OF HANDS, SOFT AND STRINGY-LIKE. HE KEPT CHOIN' ME... CUTTIN' OFF MY AIR. I TORE AT HIS BODY, TRYIN' T' MAKE HIM LOSE HIS HOLD. AND MY HANDS CAME AWAY WITH CHUNKS OF SOFT FLESH-SMELL-



RAGS! YOU'RE NOTHING BUT CHOIN' RAGS!

THAT'S WHY I SENT YOU TO HER! SHE NEEDED MORE THAN ME! I LOVED HER...



BUT I KNEW SHE COULD NEVER LOVE A RAGMAN!

SCREEEEEEEE

SHE'S SINGIN' THAT RAG-TIME MUSIC, NO COUNT, TONY! WELL, DON'T FEEL BAD! NOW THAT YOU'RE DEAD, YOU WON'T HAVE T' DISE IT! THEY'LL DO YOU... A BRAVE, THAT IS! WELL, THERE'S... NEXT TIME YOU HEAR THE OLD EXPRESSION... 'CLOTHES MAKE THE MAN', REMEMBER THE RAGMAN! OLD CLOTHES DIDN'T IN HIS CASE! WELL, I'VE GOT TO BE SHOVELIN' OFF! HOPE YOU ENJOYED THE GRIFF-KEEPER'S NEW MORAL MUCH-



WAS, WE THREE GHOULS UNITE! WE'LL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY PUTRID PERIODICAL! THE HAUNT OF FEAR! TELL THEM, KEEP A STIFF...!

EVERYTHIN' GOIN' RED AND BLACK NOW. I HEAR A FUNNY KIND OF MUSIC IN MY HEAD. AND LAUGHIN'... I HEAR FANNY LAUGHIN'...

Box of 21 New Christmas Cards

*Yours*  
**FREE!**

B. J. Stuart,  
President  
Stuart Greetings

We Give You This Feature  
Assortment of 21 New, Lovely  
Christmas Cards Free To Prove  
How Lovely You Can Be

**\$75.00 OR MORE**  
Showing These Cards  
In Your Spare Time!

## Amazing Get-Acquainted Offer For MEN! WOMEN! BOYS! GIRLS!

Imagine! This big box of 21 beautiful new Christmas Cards is yours without one penny's cost to you. You won't be asked to return the cards or pay for them, now or ever. We're making this amazing offer to show you how easily you can make as much as \$75.00 and more with our exciting new Christmas Cards!

### ANYONE CAN MAKE MONEY THIS EASY WAY!

Whether you're a student, homemaker or have a full-time job... you can make big money in your spare time! You don't need any experience! We'll supply you with a big cache of actual samples ON APPROVAL. Just show these samples to people you know. Our big rewards will on average keep you half of each dollar as your big, quick profit. You can quickly make \$75.00 selling only 110 items. With our big line of Christmas and All-Occasion Assortments, Name-Designed Christmas Cards, Stationery and other low-cost items, you make still more money!

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Read us closely. Just mail coupon for sample cards ON APPROVAL and Feature Assortment FREE. You must be satisfied that you can make money this easy way, or you may return the samples only. THE \$1.00 FEATURE ASSORTMENT IS YOURS TO KEEP, FREE, WHETHER YOU RETURN THE SAMPLE OUTLET OR NOT! This offer is limited, one to a family, and may never be repeated.

STUART GREETINGS, Dept. PG-117  
4436 N. CLARK ST. CHICAGO 40, ILL.

I am interested in making money with your outfit of sample assortments. Each is ON APPROVAL. Include \$1 Feature Christmas Assortment FREE, per post office.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City & State \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

If for forwarding, give organization's name below

### FREE BOX COUPON

Mail coupon for money-making sample with ON APPROVAL Get Feature Assortment as a FREE GIFT for trying our plan.

*Mail Now!*

### SEE WHAT OTHERS DO!

"I made \$30 in 800 a week, in my spare time. It's easy. Your cards sell themselves!"

E.B.T., New Mexico

"Customers really want these cards. Showing them is a sure way to get extra money!"

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**TERROR**



NO. 40  
MARCH



# TALES

FROM THE

# CRYPT



10¢

®

FEATURING...



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



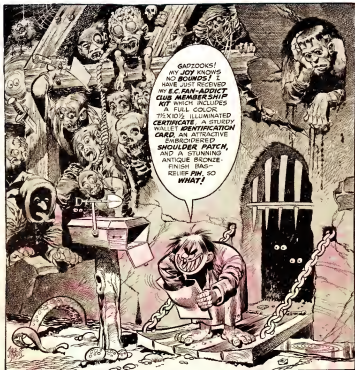
THE VAULT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



HECKER  
DRAWS



GADZOOKS!  
MY JOY KNOWS  
NO BOUNDS! I  
HAVE JUST RECEIVED  
MY **E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB** MEMBERSHIP  
KIT WHICH INCLUDES  
A FULL COLOR  
7½X10½ ILLUMINATED  
CERTIFICATE, A STURDY  
WALLET IDENTIFICATION  
CARD, AN ATTRACTIVE  
EMBROIDERED  
SHOULDER PATCH,  
AND A STUNNING  
ANTIQUE BRONZE-  
FINISH BAS-  
RELIEF PIN. SO  
WHAT?

## SO WHAT? SO YOU, TOO, CAN JOIN THE **E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB!**

FOR AN INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP, FILL OUT THE  
COUPON AND SEND IT IN, TOGETHER WITH 25¢.  
IF FIVE OR MORE OF YOU WISH TO JOIN AS  
AN AUTHORIZED CHAPTER, ENCLOSE EACH  
MEMBER'S NAME AND ADDRESS, ALONG WITH  
25¢ FOR EACH NAME, AND INDICATE THE NAME  
OF THE ELECTED CHAPTER PRESIDENT. WE  
WILL NOTIFY EACH PRESIDENT OF HIS CHAPTER  
NUMBER. EVERY MEMBER, CHAPTER OR  
INDIVIDUAL, WILL RECEIVE HIS KIT DIRECTLY...  
BY RETURN MAIL.

THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB  
ROOM 706  
225 LAFAVETTE STREET  
NEW YORK 12, N.Y.

SO, ALL RIGHT! SO HERE'S MY TWO  
BITS. SO MAKE ME A MEMBER, ALREADY,  
AND SEND ME THE THINGS AND STUFF LIKE  
WHAT THE KID UP THERE GOT... SO!

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY  ZONE NO.

STATE

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# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEY, HEY! I SEE YOU'RE HUNGRY FOR HORROR AGAIN. WELL, REST ASSURED... YOUR APPETITE WILL BE SATISFIED. IN FACT, WHEN YOU'RE FAMILIAR WITH THIS PUTRID PERIODICAL, YOU WILL HAVE LOST YOUR APPETITE ENTIRELY. SO DON'T JUST STAND THERE GROOGLING. COME IN! WELCOME ONCE MORE TO THE CRYPT OF TERROR. THIS IS YOUR HOST IN HOWLS, YOUR NAUSEATING NARRATOR, THE CRYPT-KEEPER, READY TO CRAWL YOUR SPINE AND CIRCLE YOUR BLOOD WITH THE SPINE-TINGLING TALE OF TERROR I CALL...

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT



THE EVENING PERFORMANCE IS OVER AND THE CIRCUS GROUNDS ARE SILENT SAVE FOR THE FLAPPING OF CANVASES AND THE OCCASIONAL SCREECH OF A GAZED ANIMAL. OVERHEAD, A COLD MOON ILLUMINATES THE MISTY LANDSCAPE. SUDDENLY, A SHADY FIGURE EMERGES FROM ONE OF THE DARKENED TENTS AND GLIDES QUIETLY ACROSS THE MOWS. WHISPERING...

STICH

HERE, MARTA...



THE WOMAN PEERS INTO THE SHADOWS, STRAINING TO SEE, HER HEART RACING. THE MAN STEPS INTO THE DIM COLD LIGHT, HIS ARMS EXTENDED.

OH, ERIC, DARLING.

MY DEAREST...



THEY EMBRACE... NEARLY... PASSIONATELY. HUNGRY LIPS... HOLDING CLOSE...

WHAT ABOUT CARL?

HE IS ASLEEP. HE DREAMS OF PARIS AND THE WOMAN HE HAS KNOWN...



THE MAN LOOKS INTO THE WOMAN'S EYES, GRAY-GREEN IN THE MOONLIGHT.

BUT YOU SAID YOU CAN ONLY READ THE THOUGHTS IN HIS MIND HE WANTS YOU TO READ!

HE FADING? NO, ERIC, HE HAS ALWAYS WANTED ME WITH THE POWER HE HAS OVER ME!



THE MAN SHAKES HIS HEAD SADLY, STROKING THE WOMAN'S SOFT FLOWING HAIR...

WHY DID YOU EVER MARRY HIM, MARTA?

IT WAS A MISTAKE, ERIC. I MISTOOK THIS FEAR OF NATURE... THIS ONCE IN A LIFETIME OCCURRENCE... THIS ABILITY OF CARL'S TO PROJECT THOUGHTS AND MINE TO READ THEM... FOR LOVE!



WE DISCOVERED THIS ABILITY QUITE BY ACCIDENT MANY YEARS AGO. CARL IMMEDIATELY RECOGNIZED ITS GREAT VALUE. BEFORE I KNEW IT, WE'D TEAMED UP AS A MIND-READING ACT, JOINED THIS TRAVELING CIRCUS, AND WERE MARRIED...

AND YOU'VE BEEN UNHAPPY EVER SINCE.



MISERABLE! I KNOW NOW THAT CARL NEVER LOVED ME. I WAS HIS SUBJECT... HIS THOUGHT-PROJECTION RECEIVER... A MERE OF APPARATUS... NOTHING MORE. BUT NOW I KNOW WHAT REAL LOVE IS... NOW THAT I'VE MET YOU.

HE WOULD NEVER LET YOU GO, WOULD HE?



NEVER! IF I DO, HIS ACT WOULD BE OVER. HE'D NEVER GIVE ME A DIVORCE. THERE'S NO USE MY ASKING!

THEN WE WILL, FOR ARA... JOIN ANOTHER CIRCUS. I HAVE HAD MANY OFFERS. AN ANIMAL TRAINER IS IN GREAT DEMAND.



THE WIND RIPS ACROSS THE CIRCUS GROUNDS... WHISPERS AROUND THE TENT ROPES, SASSY AGAINST THE CANVAS... CARRYING THE SIGNS, THE WHISPERS, THE SASS OF THE LOVERS IN THE SHADOWS, AND IN HIS TENT, CARL STIRS UNEASILY... OPENS HIS EYES...

MARTA...  
MARTA? MARTA?

HER BED? IT IS EMPTY!  
WHERE COULD SHE BE?



CARL SLIPS ON A ROBE AND COMES OUT OF HIS TENT... OUT INTO THE WHISPERS, SIGHING, GASPING WIND.

VOICE? COMING FROM  
BEYOND THE NEW ANIMAL  
TRAINER'S TENT...

HIS VOICE... AND  
MARTA'S?



CARL MOVES THROUGH THE MOON-  
LIT NIGHT, HIS EYES BURNING LIKE  
HOT COALS... LISTENING...

...AND AT THE END OF  
THE MONTH WHEN I GET  
MY CHECK, WE WILL  
LEAVE... FOR AND  
I... TOGETHER...

OH,  
YES...  
YES...



...LISTENING TO THE LASERWREN IN  
HIS WIFE'S VOICE, THE PULSION, THE  
RINGER...

BUT LET'S NOT  
TALK ANYMORE,  
ERIC, DARLING.  
HOLD ME CLOSE...

SWEET  
MARTA...



...AND THEN, SLOWLY, HE RETURNS  
TO HIS TENT ONCE MORE. HE HAS  
HEARD ENOUGH...

SHE... SHE HAS FALLEN  
IN LOVE WITH HIM. SHE  
IS LEAVING ME. SHE...  
I... I MUST STOP HER!

BUT,  
NOW...



THE MOONLIGHT STREAMS THROUGH THE OPEN TENT-  
FLAP... FALLING ACROSS THE PRINT... BLACK LETTERS ON  
COLD WHITE... THE LOCAL NEWSPAPER...

WHAT'S THIS? "BODIES DISIN-  
TERRED AT LOCAL GRAVE YARD...  
TORN TO PIECES AS IF ATTACKED  
BY WILD BEAST!"



OF COURSE? "TORN TO PIECES BY WILDBEAST"  
THAT'S HOW I CAN STOP HER FROM LEAVING.  
THAT'S IT!



LATER, WHEN MARTA RETURNS FROM HER RENDEZVOUS, AND CRABLES BACK INTO BED, CARL PRETENDS HE IS ASLEEP.



ONLY AFTER MARTA HAS SLIPPED OFF INTO DEEP SLEEPER, DOES CARL STIR... AND RISE... AND SO OUT OF THE TENT.



... AND CROSSES DIRECTLY TO THE NEW ANIMAL TRAINER'S TENT WITH GUN IN HAND.



WHO? WHO'S THERE? WHO.

SET UP! AND DON'T MAKE A SOUND!

ERIC STUMBLER TO HIS FEET...

WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS, CARL? PUT DOWN THAT GUN.



SO YOU WERE GOING TO RUN OFF WITH MY WIFE, OH, ERIC? WELL, WELL, SEE ABOUT THAT! MOVE!

CARL MOTIONS ERIC OUT OF THE TENT AND DOWN THE LONG SILENT MIDWAY TOWARD THE BIG TOP.

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO, CARL?

I, ERIC, I'M NOT GOING TO DO ANYTHING! YOUR LION WILL DO THE WORK!



THEY CROSS THE TANNARK FLOOR OF THE BIG TOP UNTIL THEY COME TO THE LION CAGE. THE TANNY BEAST PAGES BACK AND FORTH HUNGERLY.



MY LION??

YES, ERIC, I'M GOING TO PUT YOU IN THE CAGE WITH HIM... WITHOUT YOUR WHOP! WITHOUT ANYTHING... JUST YOU AND YOUR LION!

WITHOUT MY WHOP? I'D BE HELPLESS, PARALYZED... UNABLE TO DEFEND MYSELF! FOR GOD'S SAKE, CARL! HAVE PITY!

PITY IS AN EMOTION BELONGING TO THE PITIFUL ERIC. SET IN.



CARL SWINGS OPEN THE BARRIED DOOR AND PUSHES ERIC SCREAMING AND GOES SPRAWLING. THE LION SNARLS...



...AND THEN, THE CIRCUS SPONGES ECHO WITH THE BLOOD-CURLING SHRIEKS OF A MAN BEING TORN TO SHREDS BY THE RAZOR SHARP FANGS OF A BLOOD-THIRSTY BEAST...



ERIC'S ANGUISHED SHRIEKS AWAKEN MARTA AND SHE LOOKS AROUND IN PAIN.

CARL! WHAT WAS THAT? CARL! CA...



CARL'S BED IS EMPTY! OUTSIDE THE TENT, FOOTSTEPS POUND UP THE HIGHWAY TOWARD THE BIG-ICE MARTA SLIPS ON A ROSE AND BURSTS FROM THE TENT...

WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S GOING ON? DON'T KNOW! IT'S COMING FROM THE BIG-TOY!



SHE RUNS WITH THE REST OF THEM... UNTIL THEY COME TO THE LION TRAINER'S CAGE.

GOOD LORD!

ERIC! ERIC!



SHE SCREAMS HIS NAME TWICE, AND THEN SHE JUST STANDS THERE, WATCHING THE BEAST LICK AT THE BLAMED AND MURDERED BODY UNTIL SHE HAS TO TURN AWAY AS THE MASSES SWEEP OVER HER...

HOW DID IT HAPPEN?

THE CRAZY FOOL! HE MUST HAVE COME OUT HERE TO PRACTICE HIS ACT!

AT THIS TIME OF NIGHT?

CRACK!



AND THEN, SICK, SHE RETURNS TO HER TENT AND SITS AND WAITS, CRYING, UNTIL CARL COMES IN WITH THAT EVIL GRIN ON HIS COLD IMPASSIVE FACE...



YOU DID IT, DIDN'T YOU? YOU KILLED HIM! YOU KNEW!

DIDN'T YOU HEAR WHAT THEY SAID, MARTA? THEY SAID HE MUST HAVE BEEN PRACTICING HIS ACT!

BUT THERE IS NO SOFT IN MARTA'S MIND AS TO HOW ERIC DIED. CARL'S BED WAS EMPTY WHEN ERIC'S CORPSE ARRIVED HER. THE SHEETS WERE GOLD.

"I HATE YOU! I HATE YOU!"

"YOU WILL GET OVER IT, MARTA!"



THE NEXT DAY'S PERFORMANCE IS CANCELLED BECAUSE OF THE TRAGEDY. THE TENTS ARE LOWERED. THE CIRCUS PREPARES TO MOVE ON.

"LOOK OUT! CARL!"



IT HAPPENS SUDDENLY... WITHOUT WARNING. CARL IS HELPING WITH THE DISMANTLING OF THE BIG-TOP WHEN THE MAIN SUPPORT TOPPLES...

"GOOD LORD!"



THE HEAVY POLE CRASHES DOWNWARD UPON CARL, CRUSHING HIM BENEATH ITS MASSIVE WEIGHT.



AND WHEN THE HUGE SUPPORT IS LIFTED, CARL LIES DEADLY STILL. HIS GLAZED EYES STARE...



"HEL... HE'S DEAD?"

"TWO IN A ROW! THE CIRCUS IS JUNKED!"

"SOMEBODY GET HIS WIFE!"

MARTA IS SUMMONED. SHE STANDS IMPASSIVELY OVER HER HUSBAND'S BODY, SHEDDING NO TEARS, SHOWING NO SIGN OF EMOTION...



"IT... IT WAS AN ACCIDENT, MARTA! THE MAIN SUPPORT."

"HE... HE WILL HAVE TO BE BURIED BEFORE WE CAN GO ON!"

MARTA'S VOICE IS COLD... CALLOUS... AS SHE SAYS...



"SOMEBODY SEND FOR AN UNDERTAKER..."



MARTA LOOKS DOWN AT THE STILL FORM OF HER HUSBAND LYING ON THE TARBARE FLOOR. AND EVEN THOUGH SHE READS HIS THOUGHTS, SHE SHOWS NO SIGNS OF RECOGNITION...

MARTA! MARTA, I AM ALIVE! I'M NOT DEAD! MARTA! LISTEN TO ME! PLEASE! TRY TO HEAR WHAT I AM THINKING! I'M PARALYZED, MARTA! I'M NOT DEAD! I'M PARALYZED! I CAN SEE! I CAN HEAR! I CAN'T MOVE!



AS THE UNDERTAKER AND HIS ASSISTANT LIFT POOR CARL INTO THE WICKER, MARTA MOVES FORWARD...

MARTA! PLEASE! SAVE ME! I'M ALIVE! MARTA! I'M ALIVE! PARALYZED! NOT DEAD! PARALYZED! MARTA! PLEASE...



OH, MARTA! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

YES, MA'AM!



PLEASE DON'T EMBALM HIM, BURY HIM AS HE IS. HE WOULD HAVE WANTED IT THAT WAY!

ANYTHING YOU SAY, MA'AM!

MARTA! MARTA, STOP!



MARTA LOOKS DOWN INTO PARALYZED EYES THAT CAN STILL SEE... WHISPERS INTO PARALYZED EARS THAT CAN STILL HEAR...

MARTA! OH, GOOD! MARTA...



AT THE FUNERAL, MARTA STANDS, HER FACE A GRANITE MASK, BEHIND THE YAWNING PIT BELOW CARL'S COFFIN...

YOU CAN STOP THIS, MARTA! THERE'S STILL TIME. I KNOW YOU CAN HEAR ME. I KNOW IT! PLEASE! I BEG OF YOU! DON'T LET THEM BURY ME ALIVE!

LOWER THE COFFIN!



AND EVEN THOUGH THE SOIL IS SHOVELED DOWN UPON THE COFFIN, CARL'S FRANTIC THOUGHT NEVER STILL COME THROUGH TO HER... TO HER AND ONLY HER... TO MARTA, WHO TURNS AND WALKS AWAY DOWN THE PATH LEADING OUT OF THE CEMETERY...

MARTA! DON'T DO THIS! PLEASE! SAVE ME! PLEASE! OH, LORD... MAKE HER SAVE ME!



THE AFTERNOON WINDS? THE NIGHT BREEDS COMES UP, WHISPERING OVER THE GRAVE MOUNDS. SIX FEET BELOW, IN HIS COFFIN, CARL GONCOTRATES AS THE PRECIOUS OXYGEN SLOWLY DISAPPEARS.

MARTA? COME BACK! COME SAVE ME!  
I'LL DO ANYTHING! ANYTHING! HAVE  
PITY ON ME! HAVE PITY!



THE STARS COME OUT, WHITE PIN-POINTS IN A VELVET SHROUD. A FIGURE MOVED OVER THE GRAVE MOUNDS.

I KNOW YOU ARE RECEIVING  
MY THOUGHTS, MARTA? I KNOW.



A SHOVEL DIPS INTO THE SOFT EARTH.

MARTA?  
MARTA,  
YOU DID  
COME! YOU  
DID!



THE DIGGING CONTINUES, THE SHOVEL SCOOPING AWAY THE SOFT EARTH. FINALLY THE LID OF THE COFFIN SWINGS BACK.

MARTA? DARLING? I...  
OH, LORD... YOU'RE  
NOT MARTA!



AND THEN AS CARL LIES HELPLESS... PARALYZED... LIKE A LION-TAMER WITHOUT A WHIP... FEELING THE MAJOR SHARP TEETH RIPPING AND TEARING AT HIS FLESH... UNABLE TO SCREAM AT THE EXCRUCATING PAIN, HE THINKS OF THE NEWSPAPER LYING IN THE MOONLIGHT... THE NEWSPAPER THAT FIRST GAVE HIM THE IDEA OF HOW TO KILL ERIC.

'BODIES DISINTERRED AT LOCAL GRAVE YARD...  
FOUN TO BEEN AS IF ATTACKED BY SOME  
WILD BEAST!' OH, LORD! THEY WERE WRONG!  
THIS IS NO BEAST! IT'S A GHOUL!



HEY, HEY! YEP, KIDDIES! CARL  
ENDED UP JUST LIKE ERIC...  
BEING TORN TO BITS AND  
UNABLE TO DEFEND HIMSELF.  
AS FOR MARTA... SHE READ CARL'S  
FINAL THOUGHTS, AND GOT  
QUITE A MENIAL PICTURE  
OF WHAT WAS GOING ON! JUST  
ONE MORE THOUGHT ON THIS  
WHOLE SUBJECT AS THE BOP

CEMETERY FORT-  
MAN KEEPS TELLING  
HIS MOON CREWS,  
'ONE THAT CAN GET  
GRAVES'  
WELL, YIK  
AKKITS, SO...  
'WYE, NOW!



# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

WELCOME! SALUTATIONS, SLIME SAVOYERS!! NOW IT'S TIME FOR A JAUNT INTO THE VAULT OF HORROR. THIS IS YOUR HOST IN NOWHES, THE VAULT-KEEPER, READY TO ENTERTAIN YOU IN C.K.'S MAD WITH A FAVORITE TELL-TALE FROM MY CREEP-COLLECTION. SO HAVE THE SIGARETTE READY AND I'LL UPSET YOUR STOMACH WITH THE TUMMY-TURNER I CALL...

## PEARLY TO DEAD

OUR STORY BEGINS DURING WORLD WAR II, WHEN THE UNITED STATES MARINES WERE SLOWLY AND PAINFULLY INCHING ACROSS THE SOUTH PACIFIC AREA, INCHING AND BATTLING FOR EACH BLOODY ATOLL, EACH JAPANESE-IMPOSTED CORAL ROCK. ONE HOT BLACK STARLESS NIGHT, A SMALL BOAT MOVED SILENTLY TOWARD THE CORAL REEF THAT RIMMED THE PEACEFUL LAGOON OF ONE OF THESE JAPANESE-HELD ISLANDS. INSIDE, TWO MEN CROUCHED QUIETLY, STUDYING THE DANCING FIRES ON THE SHORE ACROSS THE PLACID LAGOON...

BETTER DROP THE ANCHOR, PHIL. THIS IS ABOUT AS CLOSE IN AS WE CAN GET WITHOUT BEING SEEN.

RIGHT, LARRY.



THE ANCHOR RAN OVER THE SMALL BOAT'S SIDE AND DROPPED WITH A BUZZLED SPLASH INTO THE BLACK PACIFIC. THEN, STRANGLY, THE TWO MEN BEGAN TO UNDOSS...

WHILE I'M CLEARING THE STEEL NETTING, YOU START SETTING THE DEMOLITION CHARGES, PHIL.

CHECK?



THEY STOOD ALMOST NAKED IN THE PACIFIC NIGHT, MUSCLES RIMMING. THEY BENT AND SLID THE WEIRDLY SHAPED BLACK RUBBER FLIPPERS ONTO THEIR FEET... PULLED THEIR RUBBER MASKS WITH THE ROUND GLASS WINDOWS OVER THEIR FACES...



READY? GOT THE CHARGES... JIMERS... FUSES?

RIGHT? GOT YOUR WIRE CLIPPERS... UNDERWATER LAMP... JACK-SAM?

SILENTLY, THE TWO MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES NAVY'S UNDERWATER DEMOLITION TEAM... THE FABULOUS PROSWEN... SLID OVER THE SIDE OF THEIR SMALL BOAT AND INTO THE CHOPPY PACIFIC...



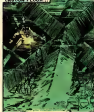
WELL, TAKE IT EASY, PHIL!

SEE YOU IN A WHILE, LARRY!

...AND WENT ABOUT THEIR BUSINESS. ...THE BUSINESS OF CLEARING THE WAY FOR THE INVASION OF THE FOLLOWING MORNING. THE ONE NAMED LARRY SLID DOWNWARD, FLICKING ON HIS LAMP, SEARCHING OUT THE TREACHEROUS PROPELLER SHATTERING STEEL NETTING...



...AS THE OTHER, THE ONE NAMED PHIL, SKIMMED BELOW THE SURFACE TO THE PILING BUNK IN THE LAGOON FLOOR...



WITH THE NETTING CLIPPED AND SAVED AND CUT AWAY AND RENDERED HARMLESS, LARRY SHOT TOWARDS PHIL TO HELP PLACE THE DEMOLITION CHARGES, HIS LANTERN BEAM RUNNING ACROSS THE SANDY BOTTOM OF THE LAGOON...



AND THEN, SUDDENLY, HE SAW IT... STRETCHING AWAY BELOW HIM IN THE GLOOMY MURKY DARKNESS... THE CYCLES BED...



AS LARRY CIRCLED OVER THE BED, STUDYING THE ABNORMALLY-LARGE SHELLED SEA CREATURES WITH THEIR PRICELESS-GLOBED GEMS IMBEDDED IN THEIR QUIVERING MEATY BODIES, PHIL SLID TOWARDS HIM, STARING WIDE-EYED.



THE TWO MEN SURFACED BESIDE THEIR BOAT, GASPING FOR BREATH...



DID YOU SEE IT, PHIL? THERE, BARR... THERE MUST BE A FORTUNE IN PEARLS IN THAT OYSTER BOSS I'M SOME BARR... BARR... DOWN...

DON'T BE A FOOL, LARRY! I'VE SET THE CHARGES. C'MON! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!

MOMENTS LATER, THE SMALL BOAT WAS HUNTING SEAWARD. BEHIND, THE DEMOLITION CHARGES EXPLODED IN THE PLACID LAGOON SIGNALING THE NIGHTY BATTLE RAGONS OFFSHORE TO BEGIN THEIR BARRAGE. LARRY SWORE AGAIN THE DIN...



WE'LL COME BACK, PHIL! AFTER THIS CRAZY MISS IS OVER, WE'LL COME BACK FOR THOSE PEARLS. WE'LL BE BACK!

SURE, LARRY! SURE...

AT DAWN THE NEXT MORNING, THE ASSAULT BOATS STORMED THE QUIET LAGOON, AND PROPELLERS TURNED BLOOD INTO THE WATERS ABOVE THE OYSTER BED...



THE BEACHHEAD WAS SECURED. THE DEMOLITION TEAM'S WORK WAS DONE. LARRY AND PHIL WERE SHIPPED ELSEWHERE TO OTHER ISLANDS, WITH OTHER LAGOONS...



THEY SAY THIS ATOM BOMB WIPED OUT A WHOLE CITY, PHIL. WARE THE JAP'LL SURRENDER NOW THEN...

C'MON! STOP DREAMIN' ABOUT THOSE PEARLS! NOW GET READY!

V-J DAY! PEACE! IT CAME SOO-DEMY... AFTER THE SECOND A-BOMB WAS DROPPED, THE JAPANESE SIGNED AN UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER, AND THE WAR WAS OVER...



HEY, PHIL! SHIPPING ORDERS? WE'RE GOING HOME! WE'RE GETTING OUT!

LET'S SEE...

SAN FRANCISCO'S GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE CAME UP OUT OF THE MIST ONE MORNING. THE TROOPSHIP SLIPPED BENEATH IT AND HOBLED IN TOWARDS A PIER WHERE BANDS PLAYED AND CHILDREN CHEERED AND WOMEN BOBBED HAPPILY.



LOOK, PHIL! THERE'S GLADYS!

GLADYS? WHERE?

THEY CAME DOWN THE GANGPLANK TOGETHER, SIDE BY SIDE, LARRY AND PHIL. BUT THE GIRL THAT WAITED WITH TEAR-STAINED CHEEKS HAD EYES FOR ONLY ONE OF THEM



PHIL, D'ARLING...

GLADYS—BABY...

HEY... WHERE DOES AN ALIEN GO TO REGISTER?

LARRY TRIED TO HIDE THE JEALOUS ANGER... THE HURT THAT HE FELT. GLADY'S PREFERENCE HAD COME AS A GREAT SHOCK TO HIM...

"I... I WANTED TO TELL YOU, LARRY! BUT... WELL... I..."

"I UNDERSTAND, GLADY."



PHIL HAD WON AGAIN. IT HAD ALWAYS BEEN LIKE THAT... EVER SINCE THEIR COLLEGE DAYS. THEY'D BOTH COME OUT FOR THE SWIM TEAM...

"THAT'S GOOD TIME, SON! EN... WHAT DID YOU SAY YOUR NAME WAS?"

"LARRY! LARRY MILES!"



LARRY'D DONE HIS BEST, BUT PHIL... PHIL HAD DONE JUST A LITTLE BIT BETTER.

"CONGRATULATE A TON, BOY! THAT BEATS MILES'S TIME BY EIGHT FEET!"

"THE NAME'S PHIL CANNON, COACH!"



LARRY AND PHIL HAD BECOME FAST FRIENDS IN COLLEGE. BUT THERE WAS ALWAYS THAT RIVALRY BETWEEN THEM...

"COME ON, LARRY!"

"LET'S GO, PHIL!"

"MILES IS GREAT, AND CANNON IS BETTER. WE'VE BOTH WON SWIM TEAM THIS YEAR."



...NOT ONLY IN THE POOL... BUT ALSO ON THE CAMPUS.

"HEY, YOU TWO! I WANT YOU TO MEET GLADY HARDY! GLADY, MEET OUR TWO SWIM CHAMPS, LARRY MILES AND PHIL CANNON..."

"HIS VERY NICE! ARE YOU BUSY TONIGHT, MISS HARDY?"

"SORRY, LARRY! MISS HARDY ALREADY HAS A DATE WITH ME!"



WHEN GLADY'S HAD COME INTO THEIR LIVES, THE REALITY BETWEEN THE TWO BOYS HAD INCREASED. THEY BOTH FELL IN LOVE WITH HER...

"GLADY, YOU KNOW HOW I FEEL ABOUT YOU! SAY 'YES'! AND I'LL BUY YOU THE BIGGEST ENGAGEMENT RING IN THE STORE..."

"LARRY! I... I LIKE YOU... BUT... WELL, I JUST CAN'T TAKE UP MY MIND!"



THEN, PEARL HARBOR, AND THE U.S. WAS IN A WAR. THE NAVY HAD COME TO LARRY AND PHIL... ASKED THEM TO JOIN THE UNDERWATER DEMOLITION TEAM. AND THEY'D ACCEPTED...

"TO LONG, BABY!"

"BYE!"

"I WILL! GOOD-BYE, BOYS! TAKE CARE!"



AND NOW THEY WERE BACK FROM THE WAR, STANDING ON A JAMMED PIER FULL OF RETURNED SAILORS AND SOLDIERS AND HAPPY LOVED ONES, AND PHIL HAD WON AGAIN...



"WE'RE... WE'RE GOING TO BE MARRIED, LARRY!"

"HAIEN, PHIL! I MEAN, WHAT ABOUT OUR SUZANNE OUT THERE... IN THE PACIFIC?"

"IT'LL BE A LONELY PLACE TO TAKE GLADYS ON OUR HONEYMOON, I AM NOT..."



"OH, SURE! SURE! WELL, CONGRATULATIONS, YOU TWO!"

DISCHARGE! CIVILIAN CLOTHES AGAIN! FREEDOM FROM REGIMENTATION... DISCIPLINE! THEY WERE ALL LARRY'S NOW. AND A SECRET, 300,000 A MILLION DOLLAR SECRET! JUST ONE THING... ONE THING WASN'T BETTER! GLADYS!



"I PICKED UP THREE SURPLUS FLIPPERS AND MASKS, PHIL. I THOUGHT WE'D TRY THEM OUT TONIGHT."

"LOOK, FELLER! I'M GETTING MARRIED TOMORROW! HAVE A HEART!"

LARRY CONVINCED PHIL THAT AFTER HE WAS MARRIED THERE'D BE NO CHANCE TO TRY OUT THEIR EQUIPMENT, AND PHIL RELUCTANTLY AGREED. THEY DROVE OUT TO A LONELY BEACH...



"I PICKED THIS SPOT BECAUSE IT'S SO MUCH LIKE THAT LARSON, PHIL!"

"YEAH! IT... IT IS! WELL! LET'S GO!"

LARRY HAD PLANNED IT ALL SO CAREFULLY! WITH PHIL DEAD, GLADYS... THE SECRET OF THE PEARLS... EVERYTHING... WOULD BE HIS...



"LARRY! WHAT THE...?"

"IT'S GOING TO BE SUCH A FINE PHIL... A GOOD SWIMMER LIKE YOU... DROWNING!"

THEY STRUGGLED WILDLY, THERE IN THE FOAMING SURF OF THAT LONELY CALIFORNIA BEACH. LARRY HELD PHIL'S THROAT IN A VICE-LIKE GRASP, UNTIL PHIL'S BODY WENT LIMF AND LIFE LEFT IT AND IT SLIPPED FROM LARRY'S GRASP AND DROVE BENEATH THE OCEAN WAVES...



AND LARRY CAME OUT OF THE WATER ALONE WITH A GRIM SMILE ON HIS FACE AND THE STORY HE'D TELL GLADYS SO CLEAR IN HIS MIND...



GLADYS LISTENED TO LARRY AS HE SOBBED OUT THE STORY OF HOW THEY'D GONE SWIMMING...HE AND PHIL...AND PHIL'D GONE DOWN...AND

...AND BEFORE I COULD GET TO HIM, HE WENT DOWN FOR GOOD. HE... HE MUST HAVE GOTTEN A CRAMP. I...I TRIED TO DIVE FOR HIM...BUT THE CREATOR!

NO? SON... NO...NO... LORD!



IT WOULD TAKE TIME LARRY DECIDED...TIME FOR GLADYS TO FORGET PHIL. IN THE MEANTIME, HE WOULD GO TO THE SOUTH PACIFIC...TO THE TINY ATOLL WITH ITS FABULOUS CYSTER BEES...AND MAKE HIS FORTUNE.

I'LL BE BACK IN THREE MONTHS, GLADYS. PERHAPS, BY THEN YOU WILL HAVE GOTTEN OVER THIS, AND MAYBE I, YOU AND I.

I'LL NEVER STOP LOVING HIM LARRY! SON! MEYER!



THE TRIP TO THE ATOLL WAS LONG, BUT LARRY DIDN'T MIND IT. ONCE ON BOARD, HE LOST NO TIME IN MAKING FRIENDS...

BABY, YOU'RE THE MOST GORGEOUS GULL ON THIS SHIP! I...I LOVE!

WELL...SO ON...DON'T JUST LEAVE ME HANGING!



WERE HIS EYES DECEIVING HIM? WAS THE FOAM AND THE SPARK AND THE CHURRING WATER BESIDE THE SHIP PLAYING TRICKS ON HIM, OR DID HE ACTUALLY SEE THE BLISTER WHITE BODY?



WHAT IS IT, LARRY?

IS THERE? IN THE WATER? I...I...NO? IT CAN'T BE! I MUST BE SEEING THINGS!

AND WAS THE FOUL ODOR OF THE SEA AND DECAY AND ROTTING FLESH THAT BEARED HIS NOSTRILS WHEN HE OPENED HIS CABIN DOOR THAT NIGHT JUST LARRY'S IMAGINATION?



CHUCK!

WAS IT A DREAM? OR DID LARRY ACTUALLY SEE THE WHITE PULPY FISH-FITTED FACE IN THE PORTHOLE THAT NIGHT WHEN HE'D BEEN STARTLED OUT OF A SOUND SLEEP?



HUH? WHO...WHO...GOOD LORD!

AND WAS IT THE SEA, OR DID HE ACTUALLY HEAR THAT LAUGHTER...THAT RIPPING BLOOD-CURDLING LAUGHTER COMING IN FROM THE MURKY FOS BEYOND THE SHIP THE NIGHT HE STROLLED THE DECK ALONE?



WHO...WHO'S OUT THERE?



THE SHIP DOCKED AT TARTI AND LARRY LOST NO TIME IN HIRING A PLANE TO TAKE HIM SOUTH TO THE ATOLL...



CAN YOU LAND THIS CRAFT IN A LAGOON?

I CAN DROP IT ON A DAME, MISTER!

ON THAT PLANE TRIP SOUTH... SWIMMING LOW OVER THE BLUE PACIFIC... WAS LARRY CRAZY... OR DID HE SEE IT AGAIN... THERE JUST BELOW HIM... THAT ASHER, PULPY, BLOATED FORM...



I'MATTER, MISTER CANNON? AIR SICK?

CHUCK... A LITTLE, I GUESS.

THE ATOLL CAME UP... A PEARL AGAINST A BLUE BATH SEA-LINING... GUARDING ITS OWN PEARL TREASURE. LARRY CAST HIS FEARS FROM HIS MIND WHEN HE SAW IT...



THERE IT IS! LAND IN THAT LAGOON!

RIGHT!

THE TINY SEAPLANE CAME DOWN GENTLY AND BAT BOOBING QUIETLY IN THE BLUE LAGOON AS LARRY UNPACKED HIS GEAR, REMOVED THE FLIPPERS AND THE RUBBER GLASS-WINDOWED MASK, AND BEGAN TO UNPACK...



HEY! WHAT'S GOING ON? YOU GOING TO DIVE FOR SOMETHING?

YEP! THERE'S AN OYSTER BED IN THIS LAGOON... WITH PEARLS THE SIZE OF FOUR FIST, AND I'M GOING TO GET ME A FEW

TINY FISH SCATTERED BEFORE HIM AS LARRY SHOT DOWNWARD. HE PASSED THE OLD RUSTED NETTHERS... THE BURKEN ASSAULT BOATS... THE WATER-LOGGED BLASTED PILING. AND THEN HE SAW IT... *THE OYSTER BED*. HE SWAM TOWARD IT... EAGERLY...



LARRY WAS SO BUSY WRENCHING THE LARGEST OYSTER HE COULD FIND FROM THE SANDY BOTTOM THAT HE NEVER NOTICED THE PUTRID, SLIMY, WHITE FORM DRIFT TOWARD HIM. AND WHEN ITS BLOATED ARMS CLOSED AROUND HIS NECK, AND THE ROTTER FACE GRINNED AT HIM, IT WAS TOO LATE...



PHH... CHOK... SLURP...

HEH, HEH! YEP, SIDDIES! THAT'S MY TAPL. THE *PILOP* OF THE SEAPLANE WAITED AROUND FOR LARRY TO COME UP FOR SEVERAL HOURS. FINALLY, HE SHRUGGED, WENT THROUGH LARRY'S PANTS, EXTRACTED THE MONKEY FROM HIS WALLET, TORRSED THE REST OF LARRY'S GEAR INTO THE LAGOON, AND *TOOK OFF*. AND YOU'LL TAKE OFF WHEN YOU RECEIVE YOUR KIT FROM *THE E.C. RAY-ADDICT CLUB*. NOW I'LL TURN YOU BACK TO C.R. I'LL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MAIL, THE VAULT OF HORROR! BYE! E.C., THAT IS!



# THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

Heh, heh! The every mail I'm getting lately! Nobody writes criticizing me anymore, nobody writes threatening letters! Now all I get is poetry, song titles, book titles, and pretentious looks like the whole country's gone crazy! Well, as Lincoln said, "To get to give the people what they want" (Lincoln said THAT—ed.) Yeah, JOE LINCOLN, he runs a defense movie outside of Omaha, Nebraska; Specializes in 3-D pictures. Only ones equipped with polaroid watchfields allowed. (Oh, hah! We thought you meant IRVING LINCOLN—and I IRVING LINCOLN? When does HE do? He goes around saying, "You gotta give the people what they want"—ed.) Oh, HEM! So anyway, here are the latest additions to E.C.'s HORROR HIT PARADE, suggested by Bernie and Sunday Goshawg of Spring Valley, New York; Bill Rosen and Joe Higgins of Brooklyn, N. Y.; Mike Larkin of Philly, P. State of Wisconsin, W.; Donald Kesselman of Chicago, Tony Egan and Gregory Rosenau of N. Y. C.; Donny Skanes of Ardmore, Pa.; Maurice Byron of Alexandria, Ind.; Dennis Bortinbank of Green Springs, Miss.; and Peggy DeMare and Lloyd Gelin of Detroit, Mich.

TERRY'S SCREAM (from SLIME-LIGHT)  
BEAUTIFUL BEAUTIFUL GROUND EYES  
AFTER THE MATE IS OVER  
SEVEN BLOODLESS NIGHTS (MAKE ONE  
VAMPIRE WEASE)  
I BELIEVE (THAT FOR EVERY DROP OF  
BLOOD THAT FALLS, A VAMPIRE GROWS)  
WITH A TONG IN MY HEART  
I'M SLITTING BY THE WINDOW (WATCHING  
THE BLOOD-DROPS FALL)  
LYNN-BOATS ARE A-COMIN  
WITH THESE GLANDS  
THE SCREAM OF TORTURE  
I'M WINCING WITH SPEARS IN MY THROGS  
RATTLE RHYM OF THE REPULSIVE  
ON THE FAULTS AGAIN WITH YOU  
ON THE TAINTED SIDE OF THE MEAT  
SQUENY YOU WERE HERE!  
WHO'S GONY MOM?  
DEEP IN THE HEART OF TEX  
WITH MY HEAD WIDE OPEN I'M SCREAMING  
WHEN YOU GORE HER TWO-LIPS  
YOU'D BE SO NICE TO COME GROWN TO  
IDA TASTES LIKE APPLE CIDER  
THE GIRL THAT I SURV  
SEND ME ONE DOZEN POSTS  
TUNE IS GURRING OUT ALL OVER

And here are some more additions to our LIVED LITERATURE LIBRARY, sent along by Benny Crow of Dallas, Texas; Jimmy Ted of Pineville, W. Va.; and Drury Mares of Springfield, Ill.

BOURNE FAMILY ROBINSON  
WITHERING SIGHTS  
NOW GREEN WAS MY SALLY  
THE LASH OF THE MORGANS

THE GIRLAND OF GODS  
GREAT EXPECTATIONS (last)  
GREAT RECOGNITIONS  
AGONY AND CLEOPATRA  
ROMEO THE GHUOL WE EY  
SORMA'S DOOM

And now for some MORRID MOVIES, produced by David Gould of Grand Lake Stream, Maine, and Sam Campbell and Annalee Alexander of Waynesville, N. C.

A STREETCAR NAMED MY SINE  
TWE AFRICAN'S SLEEN  
HIGH STROWN  
MUNG BEES  
CALL ME MAD MAN  
THE GREATEST CHUCK ON EARTH  
WRING SOLOMON'S SPINE  
THE FARMER TALKS A LIFE

Next, PULSATING POGGONS, loaned in by Web Andrews of Melrose, Mass., and Willard Johnson of Jackson, Miss.

WATCHIT SQUAD  
BLIND MATE  
MENACE DAY  
MARTIN SLAM  
SCARY MOORE  
RUG HOPE  
DEAD SKELETON

Last, and probably least, some FETTERED POETRY

## BANQUET

We had some friends in to dinner  
Everything was perfectly swell  
But mother spoiled the party  
She simply didn't taste well

—Lee Ellen Gie  
Brooklyn, N. Y.

## AUCTION

Shocking, Dorkery, Dork.  
His Head Bailed off the Neck

Now that the adjustments are over, watch out! Here comes the commercial E.C. FAN-ASSET CLIP! Don't be a slacker! Join the club! Send in two bits and get your bits. Turn to the corner, and you'll discover the blank, mawkish SUBSCRIPTIONS. By the way, one bit is a dollar for eight! THIRD ANNUAL TALE OF HORROR! The best for you from "El Seed is a quarter" we'll send you your order!

The address for subscriptions, and mail is

The Crypt-Keeper  
Box 705, Dept. 60  
125 Lafayette Street  
N. Y. C. 10013



## CHOICE!



The ground was soft and clinging as Farraday slipped out of the thick forest surrounding the prison wall. There was a heavy mist rising from the ground, and all around him he could hear the incessant clamor of the jungle. The long, dark foliage swished eerily in the hot night air... it would partially cover the sound of his feet moving through the oozy jungle lanes.

Farraday moved along stealthily, like a hunted animal, his plan of escape churning in his mind. If he could creep through the jungle into the miserable little seacoast town and hide in one of the grimy steamboats moored at the crumbling wharfs, in a week or so he'd probably be gone forever from this cursed tropical penal colony. The discomfort and pain of escaping through the jungle was nothing compared to the prospect of another five years in prison, Farraday thought to himself. He HAD to get away, at all cost, for he could never live through the prison sentence, anyway. The giant flies and vicious mosquitoes and stinging, blood-sucking spiders swarming over the camp by the millions would eat him alive long before he was ready for release!

Farraday paused momentarily, listening intently for a sound of alarm. Then he straightened up, ignoring the fact that his sweating hands were trembling with nervousness, and plunged on through the stifling undergrowth. They hadn't discovered yet that he was gone... every minute he could gain would help immeasurably in his getaway.

He was coming to clearer ground now: the earth was dry and sun-parched, the trees were spaced further apart and the grass was lower and less matted. He'd have to be careful here, for he could be spotted as he moved through the open valley. He crouched again and

moved slower, his body bent like an ape swinging along the jungle floor. About 50 yards he proceeded, then his heart almost stopped beating... a shrill whistle had sounded far back. His escape had been detected! In another moment the guards would be overrunning him and dragging him back so that insect-infested hell behind the towering stone walls!

Farraday knew his only chance was to dig a shallow grave and slip into it, praying that the darkness of the night would hide him. With a frenzy born of desperation he began to scoop up the earth at his feet; in a few moments he had cleared a patch large enough for his body. He dropped face-down into it without a second's hesitation.

Almost before he had drawn another breath he was aware of a clammy tangling spreading over his exposed flesh. It was pitch-black, but he knew without seeing what it was that was swarming over him: he had plunged headlong into a nest of white maggots! Already they were tearing at his skin, their stinging pincers probing his cheeks and jaw, sinuous lines writhing into his nostrils and mouth. His eyelids felt as if they had caught fire... but Farraday didn't move a muscle. Even as he felt the stabbing pain at his throat and realized that the skin of his chest, inside his shirt, was being torn loose, he could think of only one thing. He was in fiery agony, but if only he could stay here in this shallow trench, the guards would never find him! And as his mind reeled and his body twitched uncontrollably as his blood trickled from a thousand deadly wounds... he was soled by one thought: if the guards couldn't find him, he wouldn't have to endure the horrors of prison life again... wouldn't be assailed by giant flies and the savage spiders!



YER, KIDDIES! E.C.'S NEW HUMOR MAG, **PANIC** IS ON SALE. SO RUSH DOWN TO YOUR FAVORITE NEWSSTAND AND GET YOUR COPY. HOWEVER IF YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS ANY FOOTBALL GAMES... IF YOU WANT TO READ **PANIC** AND SIT IN THE BOWL AT THE SAME TIME... **SUBSCRIBE!** FILL OUT THE COUPON AND MAIL TO...

THE PANICKY EDITORS OF:  
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N.Y.C., 12, N.Y.

PLEASE SEND ME THE NEXT 8  
ISSUES OF **PANIC** FOR WHICH I ENCLOSE  
ONE DOLLAR (\$1.00)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_

HERE'S A BUBBLY LITTLE TALE OF  
TITANIC TERROR! I CALL IT...

# PRAIRIE SCHOONER



MILDRED JACKSON, FLUNG OPEN THE DOOR OF HER HOUSE AND SCREAMED WITH JOY. HE STOOD ON THE PORT-  
STARVED FRONT PORCH, DRESSED RESPLENDENTLY IN HIS CAPTAIN'S UNIFORM, HIS FACE BRONZED FROM FORTY  
YEARS AT SEA. HIS EYES GLOD AND SCINTILLING, HIS MOUTH SMILED, HIS TWO SUIT CASES BEHIND HIM...

ISRA! ISRA! WHY DIDN'T YOU WRITE ME  
YOU WERE COMING TO VISIT? OH, ISRA.  
IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN.

HELLO, MILLY. GOT A PLACE FOR  
YOUR OLD SEA DOG BROTHER TO  
BUNK DOWN FOR A SPELL?



D. Engstrom

MILLY LED ISRA INTO THE PARLOR...

THERE'S ALWAYS ROOM FOR  
YOU HERE, ISRA. YOU KNOW  
THAT. HOW LONG WILL YOU  
STAY?

JUST A SPELL,  
MILLY! JUST TILL  
I DECIDE WHAT I'M  
GONNA DO NEXT.  
Y'SEE... THEY TOOK  
AWAY MY SHIP. THEY  
RETIRED ME.

RETIRED... OH,  
ISRA. I'M SO  
SORRY.

YEA, MY SAILIN' DAYS ARE  
OVER, MILLY. I'M A LAND-  
LUBBER NOW. WELL, WHERE  
DO I STOW MY BEAR?



4

THAT WAS HOW EZRA JACKSON CAME TO LIVE WITH HIS SISTER MILDRED. AT FIRST, MILLY WAS VERY HAPPY TO HAVE HIM. AFTER ALL, SHE WAS AN OLD MAID...AND EZRA WAS COMPANY, BUT AS TIME WENT ON, EZRA BEGAN TO DO STRANGE THINGS.



EZRA! WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT THROUGH YOUR SPY-GLASS?

NOTHING!

ONE NIGHT, MILLY WAS ROUSED OUT OF A SOUND SLEEP BY HEAVY FANS BEATING HER NOSEILY...



WHA...WHAT'S WRONG, EZRA? WHAT IS IT?

GET UP, YOU LATE SLEPER. YOU'RE LATE FOR YOUR WATCH, AND IF YOU EVER DO THIS AGAIN, I'LL HAVE YOU FANNING IN THE BIRD.

IT WAS OBVIOUS TO POOR MILLY THAT HER ELDER BROTHER WAS ILL...MENTALLY ILL. THE SHOCK OF BEING RETIRED HAD BEEN TOO MUCH FOR HIM. HIS MIND HAD SHATTERED. HE FANNED HIMSELF AT SEA AGAIN...THE HOUSE, HIS SHIP...AND SHE, HIS CREW.



YOU CALL THIS CLEAN? I WANT THIS DECK SCURBED TILL I CAN SEE MY REFLECTION! UNDERSTAND?

YES, EZRA!



I SAID WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT WITH YOUR SPY-GLASS?

N-O-T-H-I-N-G, MILLY! I WAS JUST WATCHING THAT SHIP ON THE HORIZON!



SHIFFF! EZRA! THIS IS KANSAS! THERE AREN'T ANY SHIPS ON THE HORIZON. THERE ISN'T ANY WATER...FOR HUNDREDS OF MILES!

FROM THAT NIGHT ON, MILLY WAS FORCED TO "STAND WATCH" SHE HAD TO MOVE THROUGH THE HALLS OF THE OLD HOUSE FROM TWO A.M. TO DAWN, CARRYING A LANTERN AND SHOUTING...



LOUDER, YOU BLITHERING IDIOT! LOUDER!

EVERY BELL AND ALL'S WELL!



DON'T "EZRA" ME! IT'S "YES, CAPTAIN JACKSON!" REMEMBER THAT! NOW, GET TO WORK, YOU BLISSY RAT!

Y-YES, CAPTAIN JACKSON.

MILLY HAD BEEN A SCHOOL TEACHER IN HER YOUNGER YEARS. SHE'D WORKED HARD AND MANAGED TO SAVE A SMALL AMOUNT OF MONEY. SHE'D USED PART OF IT TO BUY THE HOUSE SHE NOW LIVED IN. THE REST, SHE'D INVESTED WISELY, AND SHE'D BEEN ABLE TO LIVE COMFORTABLY. BUT WITH EZRA'S ARRIVAL, HER MEAGER INCOME WAS NOT ENOUGH...



SO MILLY WAS FORCED TO EARN EXTRA MONEY TO AUGMENT THE SMALL INCOME SHE DERIVED FROM HER INVESTMENTS. SHE HAD TO TAKE IN WASHING...



EZRA STOOD IN THE CENTER OF THE CELLAR FLOOR, STARES ABOUT HIM WITH WIDE BEAMING EYES...



MILLY WAS HELPLESS. SHE HAD NO OTHER CHOICE... EXCEPT, PERHAPS, TO HAVE EZRA PUT AWAY. SO SHE CALLED IN A CARPENTER... A PLUMBER...



EDRA STORMED ABOUT IN THE CELLAR, SHOUTING OUT HIS ORDERS...

RIP OUT THOSE WINDOWS, CLOSE 'EM UP, PUT UP FALSE WALLS. MANAGONY PAMPELO WALLS. SET IN PORT HOLES, REAL PORT HOLES... THAT OPEN!

YES, MR. JACKSON.

CAPTAIN JACKSON? PUT OCEAN SCENES BEHIND THE PORT HOLES. HAND SHIP'S LANTERNS AROUND. PUT IN A BUNK, A GALLEY, A HEAD. MAKE EVERYTHING AUTHENTIC. THIS IS MY SHIP!

YES, CAPTAIN!



AND POOR MILLY WITHDREW HER LIFE'S SAVINGS FROM HER INVESTMENTS TO PAY FOR THE HOAGSHELL.

A, TWO... 3,000 DOLLARS, WERE YOU ARE, MR. GUNNER?

THANK YOU, MA'AM. I HOPE YOUR BROTHER IS HAPPY WITH THE JOB WE DID!



"BELOW" IN HIS SHIP'S QUARTERS, CAPTAIN JACKSON BELLOWED...

STAND BY TO CAST OFF. ENGINE ROOM, FULL SPEED ASTERN. ALL HANDS, MAN YOUR STATIONS... ON THE DOUBLE...



MILLY CAME "BELOW" CARRYING HER LAUNDRY BASKET FILLED WITH THE WASH SHE'D BEEN TAKING IN...

WHAT IN BLAZES ARE YOU DOING DOWN HERE WITH THAT?

I'VE GOT TO DO THE SHIP'S LAUNDRY, CAPTAIN. I'VE...



EDRA STRUCK OUT SAVAGELY...

YOU'LL DO THE LAUNDRY ON DECK, YOU SCULLION BEGGAR. GET OUT OF MY QUARTERS...

OWWWW...





WITH HER INVESTMENTS WIPED OUT AND THE INCOME FROM THEM GONE, MILLY HAD TO TAKE IN MORE WASH THAN SHE COULD HANDLE IN ORDER TO MEET EXPENSES. AND EIRA'S ANGER BECAME WORSE AND WORSE. . .

SCRUB OUT THAT HEAD, YOU FO'G'SLE BRUDGE!

Y-YES, CAPTAIN!

POOR MILLY WOULD ESCAPE, EVERY CHANCE SHE COULD GET, AND LOCK HERSELF IN THE UPSTAIRS BATHROOM IN ORDER TO DO THE WASH IN THE TUB. AND AS SHE SCRUBBED, SHE WOULD LISTEN TO EIRA'S RANTING AND RAVING.

EASE THE HELM! BYE 'ER MORE RUDDER! STEADY AS YOU GO! HARD APOFT! STEADY! STEADY! GO!

DOE...DOE...



ONE HOT SUMMER'S DAY, EIRA STOOD AT THE OPEN PORT HOLE, SHOUTING OUT AT THE SEA-SCAPE SCENE BEYOND. . .

WHILE UPSTAIRS, DIRECTLY OVER-HEAD IN THE BATHROOM, MILLY PANTED OVER A LOAD OF WASH. . .

THE HOT WATER, RUNNING INTO THE TUB OVER THE SOAKING CLOTHES, SENT UP CLOUDS OF STEAM WHICH FILLED THE LOCKED BATHROOM.



ANDY! ANDY THERE! SHIP ANDY! HOLD FAST. STAND BY!



SUDDENLY MILLY CLUTCHED AT THE EXCRUCIATING PAIN IN HER CHEST, TOPPLING OVER. . .

AND AS HER HEART-PAIRED, AND HER LIFE FAGED WITH IT, THE BOILING WATER OVERFLOWED THE TUB, POOLING ABOUT HER PROSTRATE BODY, SINKING THROUGH THE BATHROOM FLOOR. . .



IN HIS CELLAR SHIP'S QUARTERS, CAPTAIN JACKSON LISTENED AS THE WATER, LEAKING DOWN FROM THE OVERFLOWING BATHTUB ABOVE, FILLED THE SPACE BETWEEN THE FALSE MAHOGANY PANELED WALLS AND THE FOUNDATION OF THE HOUSE...

STORMY SEA TONIGHT! BATTEN DOWN THE MATCHES. WE'RE IN FOR A BLOW.



THE CELLAR FILLED WITH STEAM, CAPTAIN JACKSON STAGGERED TO THE PORT HOLES, SLAMMED THEM SHUT. THE PRESSURE OF THE WATER CRUMPLED THE PANELED WALLS...



UNTIL THE RISING HOT WATER REACHED HIS CHIN... HIS NECK... Poured INTO HIS MOUTH AND STERED HIS TONGUE... HIS THROAT... HIS LUNGS...



SUDDENLY, THE WATER BEGAN TO POUR THROUGH THE OPEN PORT HOLES...



SLOWLY THE WATER ROSE IN THE CELLAR, BOILING, BUBBLING, BUSTLING EDWARD'S AGED BODY, BUT HE STUBBORNLY STOOD FAST...



HIS, HEST? YEP, KIDDER. THAT'S MY MURDER MARINE OFFERING. EZRA FINALLY EGGED UP... IN HOT WATER! THIS IS THE FIRST CASE ON RECORD BY THE WAY, OF A CAPTAIN GOING DOWN WITH HIS SHIP IN THE MIDDLE OF A KANSAS PRAIRIE... IN A CELLAR AND NOW, I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE CRYPT-KEEPER WHO IS WAITING TO WIND UP MY REEL RAG! REMEMBER! IF YOU'RE A FAN, AND AN ADDICT. JOIN THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB. 'BYE, HOYT!



# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEY, HEY! AND NOW, IT'S MORROD-WEAL-TIME. WELCOME TO THE HAUNT OF FEAR, CREEPS. THIS IS YOUR REVOLTING RESTAURATEUR, THE OLD WITCH, READY TO BLING SLIME...AND WIND UP LIKE MYOCH-MAH FOR THIS IDIOTIC ISSUE. CARE FOR SOME SEA FOOD? WELL, HERE'S A TASTY TERROR TID-BIT TO TURN YOUR STOMACH. I CALL THIS SLOP-SERVING...

## HALF-BAKED!

CAULIN SUGAR STOOD IN THE SPOTLESS KITCHEN OF "THE SEA SMELL RESTAURANT" STARRING IN MOR-BID FASCINATION AT THE GULMING, BLUE-GREEN, SPINY-LEGGED CLAWED CREATURES THAT SCRATCHED DRILL AROUND AT THE BOTTOM OF THE BUTTER TUB. CAUTIOUSLY, HE REACHED IN AND PULLED ONE OF THEM FROM THE TUB, HOLDING IT UP. HE LAUGHED RADIATICALLY...

YOU'RE HERE, YOU DISGUSTING THING. NOW, NOW! DON'T STRUGGLE! IT'S NO USE! HEH, HEH!

CAULIN REACHED FOR A KNIFE, REPLACED THE STRUGGLING LOBSTER, BELLY UP ON THE RUDE WOODEN KITCHEN TABLE AND GRINNED DOWN AT IT.

FIRST, WE SPLIT YOU OPEN... FROM HEAD TO TAIL... LIKE SO...



THE LOBSTER SQUIRMED. CALVIN FORCED THE KNIFE BLADE AGAINST ITS SOFT-SHELLED UNDERSIDE AND, WITH A SLIGHT SAWING MOTION, CRUNCHED IT THROUGH. THE LOBSTER, NOW PRACTICALLY SEVERED IN HALF, STILL WIGGLED ITS SPINY LEGS AND WAVED ITS HUGE CLAWS AWKWARDLY...



HEH, HEH. NOW I KNOW THAT I HAD SOME *SENSITIVE* INSTRUMENT SO THAT I COULD HEAR YOUR BLOOD-CURLING SQUEALS, LITTLE UGLY MONSTER

CALVIN MOVED THE THRASHING SPLIT LOBSTER ONTO A RACK AND DROD IT INTO THE STOVE, BELOW THE LICKING BLUE FLAMES OF THE BRUILLER...



AND NOW, WE *BROKE* YOU ALIVE. WE LISTEN TO YOU *HOSS* AND POP UNTIL YOU TURN ORANGE-RED AND YOU STOP YOUR SQUEALING.

CALVIN STARED INTO THE STOVE AT THE BRUILLING LOBSTER. HIS EYES BLINKED ALMOST MANICALLY AS HE WATCHED ITS STRUGGLING ABATE...



DEAD, ALREADY, BLAST IT!

CALVIN GRINNED...

I MUST LOWER THE FLAME SO THAT THE *BEST* ONE WILL DIE SLOWER!



BEHIND CALVIN, THE SEA BIRD'S RESTAURANT'S CHEF SHOOK HIS HEAD AS HE WATCHED HIS EMPLOYEE.



WHY DO YOU TAKE SUCH SADISTIC DELIGHT IN KILLING THOSE POOR LOBSTERS, MR. DUBAN?

I HAVE THEM, JOHN!

CALVIN'S FACE SPUN GRIM AS HE TURNED TO HIS CHEF...



I HATE UGLY AND HORRIBLE CREATURES! HORRIBLE CREATURES SHOULD DIE HORRIBLY!

A LOBSTER IS A LIVING THING, MR. DUBAN... NO LIVING THING SHOULD BE MADE TO SUFFER

A LOBSTER IS *HIDEOUS*... *HELP!* IT DESERVES TO SUFFER, JOHN. ITS OWN *UGLINESS* MERITS AN *UGLY* DEATH...

PERHAPS... TO A LOBSTER... IT IS YOU WHO ARE *UGLY*, MR. DUBAN!

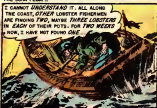


MEANWHILE, AT THAT VERY MOMENT, A FLEW MAILED UP THE BEACONST FROM THE SEA SHELL RESTAURANT, A FISHERMAN GUIDED HIS BOAT OVER THE TUBBING OCEAN SHELLS TO A CORAL FLOAT FROM WHICH FLEW A TATTERED FLAG.



THE LAST ONE. IF THERE IS NOTHING IN THIS ONE, WE WILL HAVE NO MONEY FOR FOOD!

THE FISHERMAN PULLED UP BESIDE THE BOBBING MARKER AND PULLED IT INTO HIS SEA SKIFF. SLOWLY, TEDIOUSLY, HE HAULED IN THE DRIPPING LINE THAT WAS FASTENED TO THE CORAL FLOAT...



I CANNOT UNDERSTAND IT. ALL ALONG THE COAST, OTHER LOBSTER FISHERMEN ARE FINDING TWO, MAYBE THREE LOBSTERS IN EACH OF THEIR POTS. FOR TWO WEEKS NOW, I HAVE NOT FOUND ONE!

FINALLY, THE LOBSTER TRAP SURFACED, AND THE FOUL SCENT OF THE FISH HEAD, PLACED WITHIN IT AS BAIT, BECAME THE FISHERMAN'S NOSTRILS...



EMPTY! ALL EMPTY! NOT ONE LOBSTER IN ANY OF MY POTS.

SADLY, THE FISHERMAN GUIDED HIS INBOARD BACK TO THE BEACH WHERE A WOMAN AND CHILD STOOD IN THE DOORWAY OF A WIND-SCARRED SHACK, WAITING...



WELL, AMBROSIO? ANY LUCK?

NOT A ONE, LUCKY! NOT ONE LOBSTER! I CANNOT UNDERSTAND IT.

THE FISHERMAN ENTERED HIS DAUGHTER'S SHACK AND SAT DOWN WEARILY...



PERHAPS TOMORROW, TOMORROW, TOMORROW... WE HAVE SAID THAT FOR TWO WEEKS! AMBROSIO...

THE CHILD BEGAN TO CRY...



POPPA... SON... I AM HUNGRY. I WILL MAKE THE BOY SOME FISH, AMBROSIO.

FISH! THE BOY NEEDS MILK, LUCK. LOBSTERS COULD BUY HIM MILK. LOBSTERS BRING A GOOD PRICE, BUT I CANNOT CATCH THEM! MY POTS ARE EMPTY!

PERHAPS TOMORROW YOUR LUCK WILL CHANGE, AND YOUR POTS WILL BE FULL, AMBROSIO.



THE SEASHELL RESTAURANT WAS NOTED FOR ITS BAKED LOBSTER. PEOPLE CAME FROM MILES AWAY TO FEAST ON THE SUCCULENT WHITE MEAT DIPPED IN BUTTER SAUCE. CALVIN TARGAN DID A THRIVING BUSINESS.

THE LOBSTER WAS ESPECIALLY FASTY TODAY, MR. DUBAN.

THANK YOU, MR. DUBAN. SOON EVENING, COME AGAIN.

AFTER CLOSING TIME THAT NIGHT, JOHN, THE CHEF, REMINDED CALVIN...

WE'RE BETTING LOW ON LOBSTERS, MR. DUBAN. IF WE HAVE A GOOD CROWD TOMORROW, WE'LL RUN OUT!

I'LL PICK SOME UP IN THE MORNING... ON THE WAY IN? GOOD-NIGHT, JOHN.

JOHN NODDED AND LEFT. CALVIN LISTENED AS THE CAR MOTOR BECKED AWAY INTO THE NIGHT, THEN TURNED TO THE ALMOST EMPTY TUB...

HIDEOUS, DISGUSTING CREATURES!

AFTER A WHILE, CALVIN LEFT THE RESTAURANT. HE LOOKED UP CAREFULLY, BUT HE DID NOT GET INTO HIS CAR. INSTEAD, HE WALKED DOWN TO THE BEACH...

BLAST IT! THERE'S A MOON OUT TONIGHT. WELL, I'LL HAVE TO CRASH IT.

HE MOVED DOWN THE BEACH TO WHERE A SEA SHIRT WAS MOORED. UNTYING IT, CALVIN PUSHED THE CRAFT INTO THE COOCHING BREAKERS.

THE INBOARD MOTOR COUGHED AND SPUTTERED, THEN BEGAN TO HUM EVERLY. CALVIN GUIDED THE SKIFF OUT INTO THE OPEN SEA...

A FEW MILES OUT, HE PULLED UP BESIDE A BOBBING MARKER FROM WHICH A TATTERED FLAG FLAPPED...



AMBROSE, THE LOBSTER FISHERMAN, PEEED THE FLOOR OF HIS DINGY SHACK. LUCY, HIS WIFE, WATCHED HIM WITH SAD EYES.



COME TO BED, AMBROSE. YOU MUST GET UP EARLY.

I AM NOT SLEEPY, LUCY. I AM THINKING ABOUT MY LOBSTER POTS.

AMBROSE STOPPED PEEING. HE LISTENED. FAR AWAY OVER THE BEAR OF THE GULF POUNDING THE HEAVY BEACH, AMBROSE HEARD A SOUND... A DULL HUMMING SOUND.



A SEA SKIFF... OUT THERE IN THE NIGHT. SO THAT'S IT?

WHAT IS IT, AMBROSE?

AMBROSE POINTED OUT TO SEA. OUT TO THE DISTANT TOWING SMELLS.

SOMEONE'S OUT THERE. AMBROSE! THAT'S WHY MY LOBSTER POTS ARE ALWAYS EMPTY. SOMEONE IS STEALING MY LOBSTERS.



AMBROSE WAS OUT OF THE DOOR OF HIS WEATHER BEATEN SHACK IN A FLASH.

AMBROSE! COME BACK!



I'LL GET HIM, LUCY! I'LL GET HIM!

FAR OUT ON THE MOONLIT WAVES, CALVIN DUGAN LIFTED A LOBSTER POT INTO HIS SEA SKIFF.

TWO BEAUTIFIES! THAT'S SEVENTEEN ALREADY AND I'VE ONLY RAISED HALF OF HIS TRAPS...



SUDDENLY CALVIN LOOKED UP. SCARCELY ONE HUNDRED YARDS AWAY, ANOTHER SEA SKIFF GLIDED TOWARD HIM SILENTLY.



IT'S THE LOBSTER FISHERMAN HE MUST HAVE ROWED OUT. THAT'S WHY I DIDN'T HEAR HIM! I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE!

CALVIN STRUGGLED WITH HIS INBOARD, TRYING TO START IT. THE OTHER SEA SKIFF PULLED ALONGSIDE. THE FISHERMAN IN IT GLARED AT HIM WITH BURNING EYES.



SO? NO WONDER MR DUGAN HADN'T BOTHERED TO STOP BY LATELY TO SEE IF I WANT ANY LOBSTERS TO SELL. HE KNOWS!

KEEP AWAY! AMBROSE! KEEP AWAY! I WARN YOU!

AMBROSE SHARLED...

YOU ONLY THIEF!  
YOU HIDEOUS MONSTER!  
MY CHILD HAS GONE  
WITHOUT MILK AND  
MEAT AND CLOTHES  
BECAUSE OF YOU!

I'LL PAY  
YOU,  
AMBROSE!  
I'LL PAY...



AMBROSE SCREAMED

PAY ME!! REVERT!  
I'M GOING TO REPORT  
YOU TO THE POLICE.  
THEY'LL THROW  
YOU IN JAIL, WHERE  
YOU BELONG!

DON'T BE  
A FOOL,  
AMBROSE!  
I'LL PAY  
YOU WELL  
TO FORGET  
THIS!



NO! I WON'T TAKE  
YOUR MONEY! IT'S  
JAIL FOR YOU!  
JAIL...

YOU  
FORCE  
ME TO DO  
THIS,  
AMBROSE!



THE KNIFE BLADE IN CALVIN OUSAN'S HAND  
BLINDED IN THE MOONLIGHT...



NOW, I'LL HAVE TO KILL YOU,  
AMBROSE... TO KEEP YOU  
FROM TALKING...

AMBROSE'S SHRIEK ECHOED ACROSS THE HEAVING WATER  
AS CALVIN PLUNGED THE KNIFE INTO HIS WRITHING BODY  
AGAIN AND AGAIN...



THEN, CALVIN LASHED AMBROSE INTO HIS SEASKIRT.



... AND CHOPPED A HOLE IN THE FLOORBOARDS, LETTING  
THE SEA WATER IN...





SLOWLY, THE BOAT, WITH AMBROSE'S BODY, BANKED BELOW THE TOSSENG OCEAN WAVES.



CALVIN STARTED HIS INBOARD AND GUIDED HIS SEA SKIFF BACK TO THE BEACH...



...AND LOADED THE BUTTERTUB WITH THE STOLEN LOBSTERS INTO HIS CAR TRUNK.



HE'S STARTED HOME...ROARING DOWN THE COAST ROAD AT BREAKNECK SPEED...WHEN THE SLOW-DIE OCCURRED...



AS CALVIN'S LURCHING CAR SPUN OVER, THE STEERING WHEEL SHATTERED, RIPPING INTO HIS BODY...TEARING...FLASHING...



HE LAY THERE, FUMING, SQUIRMING, HIS BODY ALMOST SPLIT IN TWO, AS THE OVERTURNED CAR CAUGHT FIRE AND THE FLAMES LICKED AT HIM AND HE SCREAMED AND SHRIELED AND WAS BROILED ALIVE.



HIS, HEE! THAT'S MY STORY, KIDDER! CALVIN ENDED UP LIKE THE LOB- STERS HE'D BEEN STEALING. WHEN I CAME UPON HIS BURNING CAR, HE WAS JUST ABOUT GONE. I WAS SO MAD THERE WASN'T A DROP OF BUTTER SAUCE AROUND! AND TALKING ABOUT SAUCE, YOU'D BETTER HURRY UP AND JOIN THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB! MEMBERSHIP IS LIMITED TO 152,000,000 PEOPLE. SO DON'T LOSE OUT! GET YOUR FULL-COLOR CERTIFICATE, YOUR EMERGENCY



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